

2022

Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre



**HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND THE  
EASTERN ONTARIO SEXUAL VIOLENCE  
SUPPORT SERVICE LANDSCAPE**

The ORCC was founded in 1974 by a small group of women who wanted to ensure fellow women in Ottawa who had experienced sexual assault could receive the right supports. Since then, services have expanded and presently includes a 24-hour crisis line, 12-hour chat and text support, counselling services, public education programs, research and work with incarcerated women at the Ottawa Carleton Detention Centre.

In 2021, the beginnings of the ORCC's renewal process began and is ongoing today. Moving forward, the ORCC is dedicated to offering client-centred, trauma-informed and culturally competent services and supports for survivors of gender-based and sexual violence. The ORCC aims to create a welcoming space and empower trans and cis women, trans men, two-spirit, gender-fluid, and non-binary survivors. We strive to show up meaningfully and are ready to respond to calls from the community on how we can best support their needs. Ultimately, we are committed to building a stronger, safer community response to sexual and gender-based violence.

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# WORKING ACROSS THE SPECTRUM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE



*The Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre has been undergoing a process of renewal and transformation. As part of this process, the ORCC is prioritizing outreach and collaboration with other service providers so that we can get to know each other, learn about each other's strengths, and work together to ensure everyone across Eastern Ontario has access to the supports they need.*

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With renewed leadership and direction, the ORCC is now poised to innovate and reimagine how to provide accessible trauma-informed supports, especially to those from communities that have been marginalized. In her role as Executive Director, Candice draws on her background addressing colonial structures that have marginalized Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA people, their families, and their communities, both across Canada and globally, bringing these insights to the ORCC and the Ottawa region.

Abrar, in her role as Director of Programs and Community Engagement, draws on her past work as a physician and studies in Public Health to promote strengths-based, holistic approaches to wellbeing that are culturally grounded, decolonial, and inclusive. Alongside Candice and Abrar, counsellors Katie and Meghan work to ensure the ORCC is delivering responsive services.

Katie brings over eight years of experience in counselling, including services for youth and families, as well as experience in human trafficking. Katie has collaborated with universities, services in Ottawa and Guelph, and is familiar with many of the challenges we face as service providers, including lack of wrap around care and safe housing.

Meghan brings complimentary experience from her work on peer facilitated recovery from intimate partner violence and her work as a researcher and counsellor for people who use drugs. Meghan and Katie are accepting new clients on a rolling basis, and though they are currently at capacity, they want to assure survivors that help is still available.

Survivors seeking ongoing counselling can complete an online intake form on the ORCC website. Katie or Meghan will reply within one business day to confirm that they have been placed on the waitlist and provide information about when to expect an opening to become available.

Survivors, family, friends, and supporters can always get immediate emotional support from a compassionate and caring volunteer on the ORCC 24/7/365 crisis line at 613-562-2333. Daily chat and text support is also available from noon to midnight at 613-544-6424.

**Candice Shaw,**  
Executive Director



**Abrar Ali,**  
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**Meghan Sangster,**  
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# EASTERN ONTARIO SURVEY FINDINGS

February 22nd was National Human Trafficking Awareness Day in Canada. This national day is dedicated to raising awareness about human trafficking and the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre chose to recognize this date by paying tribute to the incredible work that sexual assault support services are doing across the region of Eastern Ontario.

Though human trafficking is not always an explicit part of our mandate, we all know that this complex issue involves a broad spectrum of violence and exploitation. We also know that providing support to survivors of sexual violence has become more challenging during the current pandemic. Many of us are stretched beyond capacity and struggle to meet the need we see, let alone move beyond crisis support to find time to coordinate, collaborate, and activate for change.

We are all passionate and committed to ensuring inclusive and diverse services and support. Yet, survivors who experience diverse needs are too often confronted with a patchwork of services working to do their best with the resources they have. These services can become even more fractured when violence and exploitation intersect.

Sexual assault support services are often at the front-lines of human trafficking, helping survivors to identify their experiences, offering crisis support, case management, emergency housing, and counselling. At the same time, sexual assault centres see big gaps: there is a real need for stronger wrap around services, safe and affordable housing, and long-term counselling support.

More and more, we are seeing anti-violence, gender justice, anti-colonial, and anti-trafficking spaces overlap, evolve, and grow. These processes are so important and highlight the need for us to break down the barriers and silos that create hurdles for survivors. At the same time, we are taking on greater complexity in our work. We are digging deeper with more awareness of intersectionality, techniques of oppression, and better insight in the operation of power and inequality in our society. Understanding this, the ORCC is making outreach and collaboration with other service providers a priority, so we can work together in coordinated action against systemic violence.

As part of our commitment to collaborate with other service providers, on National Human Trafficking Awareness Day, ORCC staff both facilitated and participated in a

virtual event hosted by ACTION, the Indigenous-led anti-trafficking coalition in Ottawa. The event brought together service providers across the region to learn more about Indigenous experiences and services provided by Minwaashin Lodge, Odawa Native Friendship Centre, Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health, Tungasuvvingat Inuit, the Métis Nation of Ontario, and Ontario Native Women's Association.

One of the important takeaways from this day was the message that Indigenous peoples aren't vulnerable, they're targeted.

In further outreach efforts, and in recognition of National Human Trafficking Awareness Day, the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre shared a survey with service providers who engage in anti-human trafficking initiatives across Eastern Ontario. We know the timing of this could have been better; the past few years have been difficult and we are all spread thin. Despite the many constraints we all face, we received enough replies to identify patterns and highlight major needs to address human trafficking in the region.

We are incredibly thankful for the time everyone took to reply to the survey and interview questions we shared. Though the findings will not be surprising to those of us who work in this space, your insights are extremely valuable and we hope that they add to our collective efforts to effectively demand real change.

For us here at the ORCC, receiving your feedback was validating. Reading your replies made us feel less isolated in this work. Hearing about each other's challenges and learning about the different ways we are all working to overcome these was encouraging. It reminded us that we are in this together. We hope that these findings inspire similar sentiments of solidarity.

***"One of the important takeaways from this day was the message that Indigenous peoples aren't vulnerable, they're targeted."***

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN FOCUS

Whether looking to the United Nations protocol or pointing to different types of trafficking, respondents unanimously stressed that human trafficking is understood as using someone against their will. Whether by force, coercion or manipulation, human trafficking is about exploitation.

*Across Eastern Ontario, community organizations are dedicating more and more resources to human trafficking.*

Some respondents estimated that 10 to 25% of their resources go to addressing human trafficking. For some organizations this is through direct services, for others these resources focus on increasing staff capacity and training community partners to address human trafficking.

More than one service provider noted that human trafficking has become integrated across all the services at their organization, while others expressed the feeling that no matter how much they do, it's not enough. When looking at the challenges community organizations face in addressing human trafficking in our region, it's understandable that so many of us feel this way.

Half of respondents noted survivors have difficulty identifying their experiences as trafficking. 75% of respondents said that their organizations don't have enough resources to adequately address human trafficking cases. After these challenges, the next most pressing item was the lack of awareness about human trafficking in the community and the lack of awareness across service sectors in the region.

***"75% of respondents said their organizations don't have enough resources to adequately address human trafficking cases."***

***“Many of the challenges we face in supporting survivors of sexual violence reflect underlying systemic issues that have been made more visible by the pandemic.”***

## **Community Organizations are Working to Fill the Gaps**

A couple of respondents noted that they have led the creation of a local anti-human trafficking coalition that brings together service providers in order to help address awareness and service gaps. Others noted that they have diversified their outreach efforts beyond sexual and gender-based violence and are working with school boards, community organizations, and regional partners to raise awareness and support frontline staff across sectors. We all know there is a lot of work to do to bring this issue to light.

Though sexual assault support centres are doing everything they can, we also know that more support is needed from government. In Ontario, the vast majority of funding dedicated to addressing human trafficking goes to supporting law enforcement and victim services. While this is an important part of the effort to end human trafficking, the province

must ensure that community services are also supported: we are all part of the effort to end human trafficking.

When asked about the challenges sexual assault centres face in addressing human trafficking, over 70% said that there is a lack of community services to provide wrap around care. More than 50% of respondents also face the challenge of limited organizational capacity to intervene adequately.

Many of the challenges we face in supporting survivors of sexual violence reflect underlying systemic issues that have been made more visible by the pandemic. But we know these cracks were always there. Increasing pressure from layered crises, long-term funding cuts, and the continued erosion of the social safety net, have all deepened the inequality that makes human trafficking possible.

*We know what the problems are, we know the solutions, now we need the resources to implement them.*

When we are focused on crises and struggling with underfunding, community organizations can't build networks, collaborate to share information, support one another, and respond to increasingly complex needs in our communities. A number of respondents identified the challenges of identifying best practices, working with diverse populations, and a lack of funding for human trafficking services as having an impact on their ability to address human trafficking.

It's important to note that a number of respondents added the need for safe, affordable housing to the list of potential survey responses. As noted by one respondent; "There are not enough emergency shelter spaces for HT persons in Ottawa or anywhere." Housing, counselling, supports for clients with complex needs, and long-term services are all essential to ensuring wrap-around care.

Along the spectrums of violence and exploitation, many survivors who have experienced sexual violence have complex needs and require comprehensive and long-term support. To make National Human Trafficking Awareness Day meaningful year-round, we need to move beyond awareness and work towards social change that protects people from being targeted and implement lasting solutions.

Human trafficking is a complex issue, we need to work together to ensure that services and resources exist to support complex responses.

*The ORCC would like to thank the organizations across Eastern Ontario who participated in our human trafficking survey. We look forward to working together to support grassroots and community-based solutions to human trafficking and sexual violence.*

## SERVICES IN FOCUS



### Introducing Kayla – Provincial Anti-Human Trafficking Liaison, Minwaashin Lodge

Though Minwaashin Lodge is located in Ottawa, their service area includes the wider Ottawa Valley and some inter-provincial support in the Outaouais. Care packages have even been mailed to Indigenous community members farther away but close at heart.

In addition to the myriad of front-line, housing, and emergency services offered at Minwaashin, Kayla also works to bring Indigenous community voices to mainstream anti-trafficking efforts. Part of this work involves expanding conceptions of human trafficking to include the broader social context.

Working with Indigenous communities means being aware of systemic

violence, intergenerational trauma and understanding how the context of colonialism facilitates the exploitation of Indigenous people. For people who have been systematically exploited their whole life and brought up in a context of historical and ongoing exploitation, it can be difficult to imagine how to function outside of it.

Many Indigenous people don't identify with or feel they fit the language and terminology used in dominant human trafficking narratives. Indigenous people are rarely seen as victims or deserving of help, and are often blamed for making what are seen as poor life choices, while history and life trauma are overlooked. Rather than trying to understand what box people fit in, Minwaashin works with only one question in mind: how can they help?

Thinking about next steps, Kayla notes that there is a continuing need to integrate anti-trafficking awareness and education, including conversations about healthy relationships, consent, boundaries, and red and green flags. Across the service environment, an overhaul of how services are conceived and delivered is needed to overcome limitations and to help synchronize round the clock, integrated services, and help build a coordinated service network from Cornwall to Kingston.

## SERVICES IN FOCUS



### Introducing Christine – Director of Anti-Human Trafficking Services, Voice Found

Voice Found is a national anti-trafficking and awareness advocacy organization that offers frontline support services in Eastern Ontario. Through various programs, Voice Found provides no barriers, peer support services, wrap-around care, and even a medical clinic staffed by a nurse practitioner. These services are designed with flexibility so they can meet any needs that arise and ensure access to survivors across Eastern Ontario.

This flexibility and responsiveness is essential; Christine notes that everybody who exits a trafficking situation does so with completely different needs. Christine refers to the process of exiting as a ‘choose your own adventure’ story. Everyone will find their way along a path that is unique to them and their experiences.

Christine works with survivors across second-stage programming to provide

support along this path, working with survivors to help them find out what their hopes and dreams are, as they find their way to healthy relations, and to ensure that they don’t feel isolated within their community.

Christine and everyone at Voice Found is dedicated to ensuring folks have the right support for their needs, offering referrals across organizations, and working with key partners like sexual assault centres, victim services, law enforcement and safe housing programs. This work is not without its challenges, as Christine notes, human trafficking and exiting doesn’t happen conveniently, and not within standard 9-5 hours. Workers need to be there when it’s ‘go time.’

Looking towards the future of anti-trafficking awareness and education, Christine notes the continuing need to ensure that initiatives are led by people with lived experience, and that educators continue to keep clear lines drawn between consensual sex work and human trafficking, particularly when training organizations who are new to supporting survivors of human trafficking. There is also a need to expand human trafficking conversations. As Christine notes, we lack support and services for boys, men, trans and non-binary folks. There is more work to do to support all folks, regardless of gender.

# CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Through its renewal process, the ORCC is prioritizing collaboration among community organizations. We recognize the need to work together to address complex issues such as human trafficking and are prepared to support this in any way that we can. This research confirmed for us what we need to be advocating for; housing, education, and stable long-term funding, to name a few.

As individual service providers, these priorities are likely not surprising, or new. However, channeling our collective voices highlighting these needs will only strengthen these demands. We invite fellow service providers to join us so we can engage in coordinated action against violence at a systemic level. Let's work together to end human trafficking in our region.



# LIST OF RESOURCES

Name of Organization	Services	Area Served
<u>A New Day</u>	Restorative Residential Program	Ottawa
<u>Assault Response &amp; Care Centre of Leeds and Grenville</u>	Program of Brockville General Hospital: Counselling and Support Groups	Leeds and Grenville
<u>Centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions a caractere sexuel (CALACS)</u>	French Services: Support Line, Accompaniment Services	Ottawa Region
<u>Centre Novas -CALACS</u>	French Services: Support Line, Accompaniment Services, Supper Groups	Prescott-Russell
<u>CORATH</u>	Support Line, Systems Navigation, Drop-In Support Services for girls and LGBTQ2+ youth aged 12-24	Eastern Ontario
<u>Counselling and Family Services Ottawa (CFS Ottawa)</u>	Counselling (available for children as well), Accompaniment Services, Support Groups	Ottawa Region
<u>Fast 101 (Fighting Against Sex Trafficking)</u>	Public Awareness	Kingston Region
<u>Immigrant Women's Services</u>	Crisis Intervention, Counselling, Support Groups, Housing and Transitional Supports	Ottawa
<u>Indigenous Victim Services (Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte)</u>	24-Hour Crisis Support, Cultural Healing, Safety Planning	Residents of Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory and First Nations, Inuit or Métis residents of surrounding communities

# LIST OF RESOURCES

Name of Organization	Services	Area Served
<u>Kingston Interval House</u>	24-Hour Crisis Line, Outreach Programs, Counselling, Emergency Shelter Services, Second-Stage Housing	Kingston
<u>Lanark County Interval House and Community Support</u>	24-Hour Crisis Line, Counselling, Support Groups, Shelter, Second-Stage Housing	Lanark County
<u>Métis Nation Ontario</u>	Drop-In, Client Support, Education	Ontario
<u>Minwaashin Lodge</u>	Anti-Human Trafficking Outreach, Counselling, Mobile Outreach, Drop-In Program, Shelter	Ottawa Region and surrounding Indigenous communities
<u>Odawa Native Friendship Centre</u>	Healing and Wellness Programs (Counselling, Crisis Intervention, Traditional and Cultural Support, Education/Awareness)	Ottawa Region
<u>Ottawa Coalition to End Human Trafficking</u>	Network of local organizations working to meet the needs of people affected by human trafficking.	Ottawa
<u>Ottawa Victim Services</u>	Text and Chat Line, Counselling, Immediate Financial Assistance, Emergency Accommodation, Safety Planning	Ottawa & Lanark County
<u>Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA)</u>	Systems Navigation, Exiting Supports, Awareness/Education	Ontario

# LIST OF RESOURCES

Name of Organization	Services	Area Served
<u>PACT-Ottawa</u>	Public Awareness/Education	Canada
<u>Pimping is Not Cool</u>	Public Awareness/Education	Kingston Region
<u>Quinte Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition</u>	Public Awareness/Education	Quinte Region
<u>Sexual Assault Centre Kingston</u>	Crisis Support, Counselling, Education/Advocacy, Anonymous Reporting (VESTA)	Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington
<u>Sexual Assault Centre for Quinte and District</u>	Counselling, Support Groups, Drop-In, Paths of Courage Residential Healing Program	Support and Counselling Services for residents of Hastings and Prince Edward County, Paths of Courage Program available for all Ontario residents
<u>Sexual Assault Support Centre Ottawa</u>	24/7 Support Line, Support Groups, Accompaniment, Public Education/Awareness	Ottawa Region
<u>Sexual Assault Support Services Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry and Akwesasne</u>	Human Trafficking Support, Counselling, Public Education, Advocacy and Accompaniment	Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry and Akwesasne
<u>Three Oaks Foundation</u>	24-Hour Crisis Line, Outreach Services, Counselling, Training and Education, Shelter, Transitional Support Program	Belleville, Quinte West, Hastings County & Prince Edward County
<u>TI Alluriarniq</u>	Counselling, Exiting Supports, Outreach, Safety Planning, Systemic Navigation	Inuit aged 16 and older across Canada

# LIST OF RESOURCES

Name of Organization	Services	Area Served
<u>Victim Services Hastings, Prince Edward, Lennox &amp; Addington</u>	Crisis Intervention, Safety Planning, Anti-Human Trafficking Supports, Victim Quick Response Program: Provides financial assistance and support immediately after experiencing a violent crime	Kingston and Frontenac
<u>Victim Services Leeds &amp; Grenville</u>	Crisis Intervention, Safety Planning, Anti-Human Trafficking Supports, Victim Quick Response Program: Provides financial assistance and support immediately after experiencing a violent crime	Leeds and Grenville
<u>Victim Services Renfrew County</u>	Crisis Intervention, Safety Planning, Anti-Human Trafficking Supports, Victim Quick Response Program: Provides financial assistance and support immediately after experiencing a violent crime	Renfrew County, Township of South Algonquin and Algonquin Park
<u>Victim Services Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Akwesasne</u>	Crisis Intervention, Safety Planning, Anti-Human Trafficking Supports, Victim Quick Response Program: Provides financial assistance and support immediately after experiencing a violent crime	Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Akwesasne
<u>Voice Found</u>	Immediate and Long-Term Services and Supports for Survivors of Human Trafficking, Medical Clinic, Public Education/Awareness	Eastern Ontario

# LIST OF RESOURCES

Name of Organization	Services	Area Served
<u>Wabano Centre</u>	Outreach Services, Medical Clinic	Ottawa region and surrounding Indigenous communities
<u>Women's Resources</u>	24-Crisis Phone/Chat Line, Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Transition Support, Counselling, Safety Planning, Support Groups	Kawartha Lakes
<u>Women's Sexual Assault Centre of Renfrew County</u>	Support and Crisis Line, Advocacy, Education	Renfrew County
<u>YouTurn</u>	Targeted Support Services for Youth aged 12-25 involved in human trafficking, Counselling Education	Eastern Ontario