

Child sex abuse and
human trafficking
don't have a face.

Voice Found.

They have many faces.



You can't tell just by looking at someone.

The face peering through a school bus window. The face beaming out of a smiling social media profile photo. The face of a star athlete accepting their first-place trophy.

1 in 3 girls and 1 in 5 boys under the age of 18 in Canada have experienced sexual abuse of some kind.

In fact, a staggering 80% of all sexual abuse in our country targets children. Child sexual abuse isn't an exception – it's an epidemic. **So why don't we hear about it more?**

The stigma surrounding child sexual abuse stems from its proximity to home. Whether we have lived it ourselves, known an abuser, or heard a loved one's story, the concerning reality is there is no universal profile of a predator – and every child is at risk.

Both child sexual abuse and human trafficking depend on the exploitation of vulnerabilities. **Among youth who are trafficked, an overwhelming 90% report being previously sexually abused as children.** Predators take this vulnerability as a chance to "groom" their target.

The manipulative process of grooming involves building trust for the purpose of enabling later exploitation. Abusers prey upon isolation and low self-esteem, presenting themselves as caring and dependable people so they gain their target's confidence.

With time, the relationship becomes progressively more sexualized and controlling – until one is so enmeshed with the abuser they cannot see a way out.

Grooming happens everywhere: at school or church, in family homes, and increasingly online. We need to move the conversation around child sexual abuse and human trafficking beyond single news cycles. We need to recognize these publicized events are far from isolated incidents, and work towards solutions at both systemic and interpersonal levels.

Unlike many of the afflictions of childhood, sexual abuse and human trafficking are preventable.

We don't need to search for a new treatment or cure. Together, there are concrete steps we can take to protect youth and keep them from experiencing these kinds of atrocities.

Creating a safer future for the children of tomorrow starts with supporting survivors of child sexual abuse and human trafficking today. It starts with education around how we can prevent, identify, and respond to these widespread abuses. And it starts with your support.

AMONG YOUTH WHO ARE TRAFFICKED,
AN OVERWHELMING

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REPORT BEING PREVIOUSLY
SEXUALLY ABUSED AS CHILDREN.



Helping survivors find their voice.

Voice Found began with one survivor's dream. Today, our organization is a national force for change.

In 2005, after 42 years of secrecy and silence, Cynthia Bland made a life-changing disclosure: she was (and is) a survivor of childhood sexual abuse and commercial exploitation.

Overwhelmed with the desire to help others who had experienced what she had, Cynthia participated in her first childhood sexual abuse prevention and response training in 2008. Then, she began training others. Soon her team of volunteers was offering educational workshops across the country, shining a light on an often-unspoken problem.

In 2011, Voice Found was officially established as a federally incorporated non-profit. Since then, we've trained over 7,000 people across every level of government and throughout hundreds of communities in the prevention and detection of child sexual abuse and human trafficking.

By making a gift to Voice Found, you can help break cycles of sexual exploitation for generations to come.



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Voice Found knows that public education alone is not enough.

As we work towards a future without these kinds of abuses, countless survivors still urgently need help now.

That's why we launched our first survivor-led support program in 2016. Since then, Voice Found has developed a number of additional services both by and for survivors – ensuring no one has to live with the fallout of sexual exploitation alone. These include:

- **Strength Found:** A workshop series and access to 1:1 and group peer support for survivors of child sexual abuse.
- **Hope Found:** A support program for people who have been, are at risk of, or are currently being trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation.
- **The Clinic:** A specialized healthcare centre offering trauma-informed care for those who are at risk of, are experiencing, or have experienced sex or labour trafficking or sexual coercion
- **Path Found:** A learning-based program that offers survivors of human trafficking longer-term skill development opportunities

With your help, Voice Found can support every survivor on their unique journey to living their best possible life.

The estimated cost of child sexual abuse in Canada exceeds 3.6 billion dollars annually.

That number encompasses public and private expenses for health, social services, justice, education, and loss of labour productivity. It's a staggering figure – and one that shows the prevalence of child sexual abuse in our country is far beyond what most of us can imagine.

COST OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN CANADA	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	TOTAL
Health	\$5,111,410	\$1,713,532,341	\$1,718,643,751
Social and Public Services	\$203,805,029	\$710,913,818	\$914,718,857
Justice	\$117,359,516	\$355,004,60	\$472,363,876
Education/Research and Employment	\$1,140,000	\$12,578,803	\$13,718,833
Mortality	\$357,879,769	\$118,150,783	\$476,030,552
Morbidity	\$75,864,108	\$25,045,852	\$100,909,960
	\$761,159,872	\$2,935,225,957	\$3,696,385,829

*Source: The Economic Costs of Child Sexual Abuse in Canada: A Preliminary Analysis, Olena Hankivsky, PhD, D. A. Draker A study of the economic costs attributable to child sexual abuse in Canada for the 1997-98 fiscal year. The preliminary cost estimate of child sexual abuse in Canada exceeds \$3.6 billion dollars annually. This includes both public and private costs across four policy areas: health, social/public services, justice, and education/ research and employment.





The power of peer support.

Lived experience is the strongest connection you can have with another human. We relate to one another through our shared stories.

For survivors of child sexual abuse, some stories feel untellable. Shame and societal stigma keep people silent about the worst things that have happened to them – things that erode mental health, and come at a tremendous price for both people individually and our society as a whole.

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Living through child sexual abuse and commercial exploitation left me feeling like an alien. It was almost surreal how the world around me just kept moving when I felt so stuck in my own trauma. It seemed like I didn't belong anywhere. But I knew in my gut that if I had experienced this, other people must have as well. Meeting fellow survivors was how I began to heal. It made me want to do something with my pain – something that would help other people with theirs, too. When I started Voice Found, people were already sharing their stories. They just needed to be heard.”

– Cynthia, Founder & CEO of Voice Found

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The mindful way to relax and unwind
DOT2DOT

āh-yiyl
niw'sakatahokan anima
Ouch That's...



Children and youth are over five times more likely than their adult counterparts to be sexually assaulted.

They grow up to live with consequences including low self-esteem, guilt, self-blame, social withdrawal, marital and family problems, depression, and numerous other challenges including addictions. Both male and female survivors of child sexual abuse are 2.5 to 3 times more likely to report problems with substance use.

How do we break these destructive cycles? By giving people a safe space in which they are empowered to reclaim their life's story – on their own terms, amongst other people who have lived through similar experiences.

Strength Found offers adult survivors of child sexual abuse exactly that.

Over 15 weeks, participants come together for facilitated discussions to learn about the impacts of child sexual abuse and gain tools to develop or enhance positive coping skills. Topics covered include everything from grounding techniques for flashbacks to sexuality and suicide safety planning. It's not about probing individual histories but forging new futures.

In the comfort of an environment filled with people who “just get it”, survivors are given vital resources to help them move forward from what was done to them.

The results are transformative: participants gain renewed confidence, build new connections, and make tremendous strides in their healing journey.



The program is really powerful. I've seen the work, and I've seen the results. I feel like Strength Found allows us to make something bittersweet out of pain. As peers, we come in equal. That's really comforting for people. They do not have to explain their anxieties, their fear, their pain, their trauma. We're all on the same ground. There are plenty of tears, but even more laughter. By sharing our vulnerabilities, we also find what makes us strong."

— Lucie, Strength Found Program Manager & Certified Peer Supporter



BE LOUD
BE HAPPY
BELIEVE IN THE
POWER WITHIN
YOURSELF
RESPECT
BE KIND TO OTHERS
LIVE AND LET LIVE
BELIEVE IN
PEACE



The right support for every survivor's needs.

Strength Found's workshops are made available to people of all gender identities – something often sorely missing in the limited services available for survivors of child sexual abuse.

Groups for male and female survivors run concurrently, ensuring the specific needs of each demographic are addressed.

Because men have most frequently been victimized by other males, they often deal with the added weight of toxic norms around their masculinity. It can feel even more impossible to disclose sexual abuse in this context – despite the grim reality that 20% of boys will be sexually abused before they turn 18.

Voice Found is committed to ensuring every survivor can get the support they need.

That's why we also offer 1:1 peer support through our Strength Found program for those who are not ready for, or are uninterested in, a group setting. This short-term support ensures the same vital peer connection, while increasing participants' resilience. Our peer supporters break potential paths forward down into manageable pieces to build momentum for healing.

Providing survivors with the resources they need to keep going, at no cost to them, is an essential piece of our mandate. Private therapy expenses can easily range in the thousands each year, making services all too frequently inaccessible for those who need them most.

Strength Found.

Your support of Voice Found helps make this extraordinary and powerful group possible.





Breaking the silence: Peter's story

My high school music teacher sexually abused me. Though I told the principal what had happened, nothing was really done about it. So I kept the secret – his secret – for decades. It felt like my burden to carry, until one day I learned the same kinds of things had been done to other students. I was sick to my stomach, and I went to the police. He's since pled guilty and is serving time in federal prison.

What happened to me is part of who I am as a human being. I don't foresee that ever changing. But when I started looking for help, I felt like I was an anomaly. There were virtually no resources for men who had experienced child sexual abuse. **I'm glad Voice Found has stepped up to fill that gap – and that I can provide peer support to other men who've lived through the same kinds of things I did.**

Giving people an outlet like that is so important. Your whole life can look together on the surface even when underneath everything is a struggle. **I feel stronger because I've shared my story. I want to help more victims of sexual abuse have that opportunity.**

Now is the time to make your gift
to Voice Found, and help shatter the
silence that surrounds child sexual abuse
and human trafficking.





imagine



There is no template to exit trafficking.

For many people, the phrase *human trafficking* conjures sensationalized images of victims smuggled across borders or shackled in basements. You probably don't think about the quiet teenager who lives next door, or a friend who suddenly fell out of touch after she started dating someone new. **But human trafficking is happening here, in our backyard.**

Defined broadly as the use of violence, deception, or coercion for the purpose of commercial exploitation through sex or labour, human trafficking has only worsened in the age of the internet. It is now easier than ever for predators to find and groom their targets.

Since its inception in 2016, our Hope Found program has served more than 270 people experiencing or at risk of trafficking across Ottawa and Eastern Ontario. We know this number only represents a fraction of the people in our community who are currently being sexually exploited for profit.

At any time of day or night, Voice Found's phone could ring with the next person in need of support to exit trafficking. **You can ensure we're ready to answer the call.**



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A lot of people are shocked when I tell them about my job. They're in denial that trafficking happens here, and nobody wants to believe someone they love could be at risk. But I'm always busy – there's always someone who needs help. Nobody should be left to fend for themselves after living through this kind of trauma.”

— Christine, Director of Anti-Human Trafficking Services

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Voice Found accepts survivors of human trafficking as the people they are today.

Our survivor-led Hope Found program doesn't offer one-size-fits-all responses to trauma, or temporary solutions for long-term problems. **Voice Found understands that survivors are the experts of their own lives.**

Our first priority is to ensure the comfort and safety of those who reach out to Voice Found. Next, we work with them to assess their most immediate needs. A typical intake meeting covers topics like food, shelter, clothing, safety planning, transportation, and both psychological and emotional support. **One of the most common needs is medical care.**

Human trafficking by the numbers: Why your support matters



Two-thirds of Canadian human trafficking cases reported by police take place in Ontario. In fact, Ottawa alone accounts for 11% of all cases – with an incidence rate nearly 5x the national average.



Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of human trafficking victims are under the age of 25. A full $\frac{1}{4}$ are minors.



The most common age for recruitment into trafficking in Canada is 13 to 14.



Approximately half of the clients served by Hope Found are deemed "high risk" at the time of intake.

For those who continue in the Hope Found program, **89%** show a reduced risk level over time.





A different kind of health care.

Many people exiting trafficking are in need of medical attention – but few feel comfortable accessing care in a typical doctor’s office setting. Past experiences of shame or judgement dissuade them from getting the help they need. For those who have experienced sexual violence, healthcare interactions can feel violating or even re-traumatizing.

That’s why Voice Found opened The Clinic: a medical hub for those who are at risk of, are experiencing, or have experienced sex or labour trafficking or sexual coercion. Our team of medical professionals offers trauma-informed and person-centered medical care that is responsive to survivors’ unique needs.

The Clinic is a bright and friendly space, designed to minimize overlap in the waiting room so patients can maintain their privacy. Clients enter through one door and leave through another. Voice Found’s healthcare team provides general primary care along with STI testing, access to birth control, and individual psychotherapy. No health card is required, and we also offer support for medication and transportation as needed for safety reasons.

The Clinic.

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Patients at The Clinic are in complete control of their experience. We go at their pace, whatever that may be. Appointments are an hour long so nobody feels rushed. If it takes multiple visits for someone to be ready for a particular test, then we wait. We explain absolutely everything so people can make informed choices for their health.”

— Carrie, Clinical Director

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Moving from now to next.

Once the most immediate needs of people exiting human trafficking – including medical care – have been addressed, Hope Found's focus shifts to short- to mid-term needs. These might include detox and addiction services, dental care, physiotherapy, victim services, legal support, trauma and anxiety counselling, and case management support.

Because no survivor is the same, no two days are either. Whether it's accompanying someone to a court hearing or shopping for a microwave for somebody's first apartment, Voice Found staff ensure survivors feel supported as they begin to rebuild their lives.

With time and trust, our clients begin to dream again. We offer longer-term services including education and employment preparation to ensure people can move beyond their current circumstances to live a life of their own imagining. No matter how much time goes by, the Hope Found program remains available to anyone we've previously supported.

Voice Found supporters ensure survivors of human trafficking can access competent and compassionate health care when they need it most.



Starting from scratch: Crystal's story

When I first called Voice Found, things felt hopeless. I'd tried to leave my partner – who had become my trafficker – over and over again, but I kept ending up back in the same awful situation. I didn't see a real way out. I'd dropped out of high school to move in with him and here I was with no education, no money... Not even a piece of government ID.

The person on the other end of the line immediately made me feel at ease. She told me she'd been through what I had, and that she would help me get to a safe place and get the assistance I needed.

Voice Found has been the most incredible support. From helping me find somewhere safe to live to getting me counselling and walking me through the process of applying to college, they make me feel like someone is always in my corner. Thanks to Voice Found, I'm starting to believe in my own potential.

Together, we're helping
survivors of human trafficking
reclaim their futures.



Paving a new way forward.

The truth is that progress and healing aren't linear. **Half of Voice Found's clients have attempted to exit human trafficking five or more times.** When they eventually succeed in leaving, they must still reckon with the ongoing impacts of the abuse they endured.

Survivors who have exited trafficking are often isolated due to stigma, safety concerns, poverty, addictions, and mental health issues. Not everyone recovers fully from our trauma. But they can learn how to manage it, to live with it, and ultimately, to thrive despite it. That's the vision that drives Path Found.

For those who have exited a life of commercial sexual exploitation and/or domestic trafficking, **Path Found offers an innovative collective approach to support people in moving from victim to survivor.**

Led by survivors, for survivors, it equips participants with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to move forward into their next chapter. Members meet regularly for training workshops on a variety of topics such as employment goals, self-care, art therapy, financial literacy, and healthy relationships.

Path Found strives to enable survivors of human trafficking to see themselves and their futures as full of promise and potential. We provide the safety, support, and opportunities to help them realize their inherent strength and value – **and we can't do it without you.**



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Voice Found is a leader in the human trafficking world. The work they do is so impactful, and so important. As a partner organization, we have such trust in their services that we never have to question referring our clients to their programs.”

— Marisa, YouTurn Executive Director

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Love



Finding the path to happiness: Natalie's story

"I see now that my childhood played a big part in everything," Natalie says.

The mother of two is a survivor of human trafficking and struggled with addiction for years. When she reached out to a local harm reduction program, they referred her to Voice Found for additional support. Natalie was invited to participate in the Path Found program.

"Starting the program opened my eyes," she recalls. "I spent years blaming myself for what happened to me... Things happened when I was a kid that I never addressed, and I didn't know how much I'd been affected."

The isolation and shame of human trafficking left Natalie feeling defeated and self-loathing, even as she became sober and focused her attention on her children.

"People don't understand that with human trafficking, it's not like you're chained in a basement. The chains are invisible."

Until Path Found, those chains kept Natalie tethered to her past. She lived in poverty, struggling to pay bills and lacking the confidence to try and re-enter the workforce after her experiences being trafficked.

Path Found's workshops changed the trajectory of her future.

"It was amazing," Natalie says. "When it came time for the workshop on financial literacy we didn't just discuss budgeting and saving – we talked about all the emotions that are tied up in money. It completely changed my perspective. I feel like I have a hold on my life again."

Over the years she participated in the program, Natalie's self-confidence and life skills grew exponentially. Today, she's paid off her debts and boosted her credit score. Natalie works part-time for a small business, and relishes spending as much time as possible playing with her kids.

"I feel like I'm breaking the cycle," she explains. "My kids get to be kids. I've forgiven myself for my past, and I'm starting to dream again... And dream bigger."

Having experienced the power of connecting with peers during the Path Found program, Natalie now strives to lead by example. She's committed to modeling possibilities for other survivors, and showing them their lives are far from over – no matter how daunting the future might feel.

Natalie is particularly thankful for the ongoing support that Voice Found continues to offer her when she needs it. "I know I can always reach out if I'm having a hard time."

You can help more survivors like Natalie carve their own path to a better tomorrow.



Help ease the burdens of secrecy and shame.

We can't afford to turn away from the realities of child sexual abuse and human trafficking.

Complacency costs lives. Histories of sexual abuse lead to higher rates of attempted suicide amongst both male and female victims.

In recent years, growing conversations around the "MeToo" movement have encouraged more survivors of sexual assault to come forward – but discussions around child sexual abuse remain largely taboo. Stigma breeds silence, and silence leaves people with the misbelief that they're alone in their experiences.

That means for too many of us – for *most* of us – these violations are happening uncomfortably close to home. We have a duty to protect the children in our lives, and to support survivors doing the hard work of breaking these harmful cycles.

Surviving child sexual abuse is not only traumatic in and of itself, but also becomes a targeting factor for human traffickers who prey on any sign of vulnerability.

In an era where luring a victim away from their friends and family begins as easily as sending them a message on social media, we must be more vigilant than ever in educating the public about the warning signs of child sexual abuse and human trafficking.

95% of child sexual abuse victims
know their perpetrator.



Until we are able to make that day a reality,
we must commit to doing better by survivors.

Do you know what to look for?



When we become aware of these red flags, it can feel like we suddenly see them everywhere. **So let's name them.**

Every time we speak up about sexual exploitation, we are contributing to a future where no child has to live with the trauma of their stolen innocence. Where no person has to be imprisoned by the invisible chains of their trafficker. Where each of us has full agency over our own bodies.

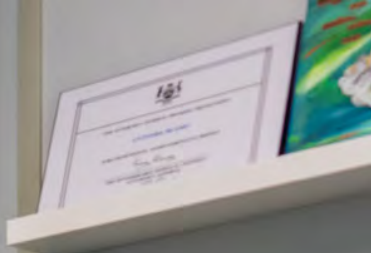
Until we are able to make that day a reality, we must commit to doing better by survivors.

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Helping a survivor start over isn't an inexpensive undertaking. The support of Voice Found donors is essential to ensuring we can meet people's needs in their time of crisis, and set them up to live a productive and healthy life on their own terms.”

— Cynthia, Founder & CEO of Voice Found

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We're trying to do it all with very little.

Your support of Voice Found can ensure people of all gender identities can access the peer support, resources, and health care necessary to nurture their resiliency and take the first steps – or a giant leap – forward.

Your gift to Voice Found today will provide vital funding to sustain our in-demand programs and ensure we never have to put someone in crisis on a waitlist.

How will your gift be used? Here are just a few examples of your life-changing impact.

- You can **offer more mental health supports** for survivors including increased availability of counselling services.
- You can **ensure seamless case management** for complex cases, so no survivor falls through the cracks of our complicated social service system.
- You can **keep The Clinic open more hours each week** to meet pressing demand for primary health care and other medical services.
- You can **help purchase vital supplies for people exiting trafficking** including clothes, groceries, a cell phone, and prescription medication.
- You can **provide sustainable funding for support programs** like our Hope Found, Path Found, and Strength Found initiatives.

Together, we can help more survivors
find their voice and end cycles of
sexual exploitation once and for all.



Make your life-changing donation
to support survivors of child sexual abuse
and human trafficking online
at voicefound.ca today.

**Gifts can also be sent by cheque to our mail pick-up location
(the Voice Found office address is kept confidential for safety reasons):**

 **Voice Found | c/o 604B-1 Nicholas Street | Ottawa, ON | K1N 7B7**

**Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out
by email to info@voicefound.ca or phone at (613) 763-5332.**

Voice Found.

