



**For Immediate Release**

**See The Signs to Stop Human Trafficking**

National Awareness Campaign launches on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, Human Trafficking Awareness Day



WINNIPEG (February 22, 2023) — Sex trafficking is a growing crisis in cities and towns across the country, with Canadian youth being manipulated and forced into sex trafficking every day. The [Joy Smith Foundation](https://www.joysmithfoundation.ca) has launched “[See the Trafficking Signs](https://traffickingsigns.ca),” a powerful national awareness and education campaign intended to prevent Canadian youth from being lured into the sex trade.

Timed to coincide with **National Human Trafficking Awareness Day** (Feb. 22), the campaign is designed to educate people on the common signs that someone may be at risk of being groomed and lured into sex trafficking.

The awareness campaign being supported by police at both the national and regional levels, reflecting the fact that sex trafficking is widespread, occurring in communities both large and small from coast to coast.

“Every day, police officers across the country encounter survivors of human trafficking. The children being targeted, trafficked and exploited come from all backgrounds and from every

part of society,” **says Sergeant Tara Clelland of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.** “The key to stopping this exploitation is through education and awareness. Canadians can start making a difference today by knowing the signs of human trafficking and contacting police if they fear a child is being exploited.”

The campaign aligns with the Winnipeg Police Service’s ongoing efforts to fight human trafficking with all available tools, including enforcement, partnerships, and education,” **says Sergeant Andrea Scott, who oversees the Winnipeg Police Service Counter Exploitation and Missing Persons Units.**

“The issue knows no borders and is often hidden in plain sight,” says Sgt. Scott. “We support the Joy Smith Foundation’s efforts to bring the broader community together, create awareness and help protect those most vulnerable in our community.”

“Education is our greatest weapon in prevention,” **says Janet Campbell, CEO and President of the Joy Smith Foundation,** Canada’s leading authority on the prevention and intervention of human trafficking. “Predators shouldn’t be the only ones who recognize who is most vulnerable. When each of us know the signs to watch for, we can all take steps to keep it from happening.”

The attention-grabbing campaign highlights nine key warning signs of sex trafficking:

- New clothing, jewelry or gifts without having money
- Frequent sleepovers at a friend’s house
- Sudden interest in a man several years older
- A sudden change in style of dress or makeup
- A new circle of friends and isolation from their old group
- Change in attitude towards school, regular activities, friends
- Grades dropping
- Unexplained cuts or bruises
- Using two cell phones

“It takes a nation to stop human trafficking,” **says Joy Smith, Founder of the Joy Smith Foundation.** “We need to join forces with our police agencies, our survivors, and our communities to bring awareness to this horrific crime. The See the Trafficking Signs campaign enables everyone to participate. You could save a child. It could be your own.”

The national awareness campaign was created by the Joy Smith Foundation in partnership with Toronto agency [Diamond](#). It features a harrowing video produced and directed by Taylor Reid of Untitled Films that provides a first-hand look at how people are slowly groomed and coerced by sex traffickers.

[View the “See The Trafficking Signs” campaign video](#)

The video is being supported by a series of out-of-home ads and posters show various youth inside the campaign's visual motif, the triangular warning sign. The ads also feature an overview of the nine warning signs that someone is being groomed by a trafficker. All the campaign assets drive to the [TraffickingSigns.ca](https://traffickingSigns.ca) website, which contains additional information.

"The warning signs of sex trafficking are there in plain sight, if you know what to look for," **says Dave Stevenson, SVP Creative Director at Diamond.** "This campaign is about making trafficking signs as obvious as traffic signs to give every Canadian the know-how to keep youth safe."

The Joy Smith Foundation is also partnering with influencers with a combined reach of more than 1.5 million to help spread the message. Each influencer is being given a red "Warning Signs" shirt, as well as a print of each of the nine warning signs to talk through.

### **About the Joy Smith Foundation**

The Joy Smith Foundation works to provide access to information so that every Canadian man, woman and child is educated and empowered to stay safe from manipulation, force, or abuse of power designed to lure and exploit them in the sex trade or forced labour.

For more information: <https://joysmithfoundation.com>

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