

**“Human trafficking and the
Family:
an underdeveloped link,
central to prevention and
protection efforts”**

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What is human trafficking?

Human smuggling:

- Clandestine entry to Canada
- Transit often under difficult conditions
- Freedom upon arrival

Human trafficking

- Entry not necessarily clandestine
- Labour and movements controlled by 3rd party upon arrival

Study on Protection Services for Victims of Human Trafficking

- Commissioned by Justice Canada
- Qualitative questionnaire
- Profile of trafficking in Canada and services available for victims
- 40 interviews with community groups in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto and Montreal

Unexpected Research Result:

Families raised as key:

- Involved in victims becoming trafficked
- Major factor in barriers to providing protection to victims

Vulnerability to Trafficking

- Economic situation of the family of origin
- Psychosocial dynamics in the family of origin
- Family members as traffickers

Barriers to Escaping Trafficking

- Fear for safety of family members in home community
- Desire to provide economic support to family
- Fear of losing immigration status and/or of deportation
- Exploitation by family members

Social Work Implications

- Consider trafficking or third party dependency among migrants coming for services
- Include family considerations when planning interventions with individuals
- Consider transnational family dynamics

Policy Implications

Prevention:

- International cooperation for local economic development
- Social services in home communities to address psychosocial family problems such as addictions, gambling, abuse

Policy Implications

Protection:

- (Only) Voluntary return to communities of origin
- Extend protection from traffickers to family members
- Post-trafficking economic options
- Post-trafficking immigration options

Conclusion

- Expanding the understanding of human trafficking
- Families have been acknowledged, but this research puts them at the centre of the phenomenon
- Transnational research necessary to understand family impacts and influence in human trafficking