# INFORMATION SHEET ON THE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF MINORS

## 01. What Is Sexual Exploitation?



Sexual exploitation occurs when a person takes advantage of another person's body for sexual purposes in order to obtain a benefit, whether financial or otherwise.

(Government of Québec, 2022)

## 02. The Law



Under the law, any person under the age of 18 who engages in a sexual act, whether voluntarily or not, in exchange for money, goods, services, or favors (whether they keep them or not) is considered to be experiencing sexual exploitation. This is illegal.

## 03. Adolescent Vulnerabilities



- Survival needs
- Money
- Desire for a luxurious lifestyle
- Recognition
- Sense of belonging
- Security
- Thrill-seeking
- Affection / desire to be loved
- Power / status
- Curiosity

## 04. Recruitment



Recruitment can occur anywhere young people gather, including social media, schools, restaurants, parks, events, parties, and other public or private spaces.

Common recruitment strategies may include: violence, blackmail, charm, seduction, normalization of sexual activity, manipulation, threats, isolation, drug dependency.

## 05. Risk Factors



- History of sexual abuse or early sexualization (80% of individuals involved in sexual exploitation activities report having experienced sexual abuse in childhood)
- Running away
- Drug and/or alcohol use
- Association with delinquent networks
- Mental health challenges
- Behavioral difficulties
- Family problems

## 06. Protective Factors

Protective factors are positive influences that increase a young person's resilience and reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim of sexual exploitation.

- A meaningful, trusting relationship with a reliable adult and secure attachment
- Comprehensive sexuality education
- A sense of academic or personal achievement



## 07.

## Warning Signs Potentially Linked to Sexual Exploitation



Youth involved in juvenile prostitution or sexual exploitation often display **sudden or extreme changes** in attitude, behavior, physical appearance, hygiene, or language.

Examples may include:

- Being evasive or lying about whereabouts
- Taking multiple showers in the same day
- Sudden changes in peer groups
- Using new or more explicit language
- Possessing money or expensive items of unknown origin and providing questionable explanations

**Please note that these changes may also occur for reasons unrelated to sexual exploitation.**

## 08.

## Supportive Attitudes



If your child may be experiencing sexual exploitation, supportive attitudes include:

- Listening actively
- Believing them
- Encouraging their strengths
- Offering constructive support
- Avoiding blame or guilt
- Promoting their autonomy
- Validating their emotions
- Being aware of your own limits

(Guide s'outiller pour mieux comprendre, CLES)

## 09.

## Guidance for Loved Ones



Suggestions for loved ones to care for themselves:

- Learn to distinguish between your child's behavior and who they truly are
- Reflect on the following questions:

-Where do I have power?
-What do I have control over?
-What must I accept?
-Where can I take action?

- Maintain the relationship while respecting your own boundaries as a loved one.

(Guide: Building Skills to Better Understand – CLES)

## 10.

## Resources

- CALACS des Rivières Haute-Yamaska Brome-Missisquoi: 450-375-3338
- Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline (24/7): 1-833-900-1010
- Info-aide Sexual Violence (24/7): 1-888-933-9007
- Youth Protection Services (Direction de la protection de la jeunesse): 1-800-463-4834
- Concertation des luttes contre l'exploitation sexuelle (CLES): 514-750-4535
- Emergency: 911
- Website: https://www.ensemblequebec.ca

Tool developed by CALACS des Rivières Haute-Yamaska Brome-Missisquoi, 2025.

Sources : CIUSSS Capitale-Nationale : https://sway.cloud.microsoft/hCmDx26BMJloxlVF?ref=Link