

# BREAK the CHAINS

SPEAKING TOUR



Supported by:

international  
**youth**  
foundation®



**Dear Educator,**

**Modern-day slavery is a booming business.**

With over 27 million slaves—the largest number in our human history—human trafficking and enslavement ranks as the third most profitable criminal industry. A modern day slave may be a 10 year-old girl in southwestern Ghana who has been given to a local fetish priest by her family to perform household duties and bear his children; an 11 year-old girl lured by the false prospects of working in restaurants in the mines of the Amazon and then beaten, raped, and forced to work as a prostitute; or a 15 year-old boy forced to prostitute in the tourist resorts of Thailand, where the local police accept bribes to turn a blind eye. Born into it, coerced or tricked, these slaves are purchased and sold as commodities, degraded, tortured, and forced to work under the authority of violence. While the nature of slavery has changed, it is still very much alive.

Child sex slavery remains as one of the most rampant and vile branches of the modern day slavery industry. It is estimated that up to 1.2 million children are trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation or labour, with victims usually between the ages of 9 and 15, and some as young as 5 years old. These children are runaways or kidnapped from their homes; duped or manipulated to move to big cities with the promise of legitimate work; purchased from their families, and then violently held against their will for the purposes of exploitation.

*What kind of world are we living in if our children are treated as chattel? How can this happen? How can young people reach out to their exploited peers and foster environments where children are protected and free?*

These are the types of questions Cheryl Perera, international children's rights activist and Founder and President of OneChild will help your students explore as she sweeps across the province during OneChild's premiere motivational speaking tour, Break the Chains. Through her travels in Asia and South America where she has gone undercover to rescue children and met with child survivors of sexual exploitation, Cheryl has witnessed first-hand the devastating impact of child sex slavery which she recounts through gripping stats and powerful personal storytelling. Although her account of what goes on is nothing short of tragic, the stories of resilience and strength of these children, as well as her inspirational personal story of an average Ontario teenager-turned child rights crusader and call to action, will leave your students empowered to be the difference that makes the difference in their communities and in their world.

The *OneChild Break the Chains Speaking Tour* will benefit your students by:

- Providing education on children's rights and mapping one of its gravest violations and its connection to globalization and other pressing world issues in the twenty-first century;
- Helping to shape your students' global civic identity and moral purpose;
- Providing tangible ways to hone in on their leadership potential and support their peers on a local and international level through unique awareness-raising, advocacy, and fundraising campaigns with OneChild. These opportunities help to develop students' critical and creative thinking and research and communication skills.
- Offering the tools and support from OneChild to learn basic civic literacy skills.

**Let's make this generation, the generation that ended slavery. We invite you to join us in lighting the spark across Ontario.**

In Solidarity,  
The OneChild Team

# BRINGING BREAK THE CHAINS TO YOUR SCHOOL



OneChild is the premiere organization inspiring a movement of children and youth leading the action against the global sex trade in children. Founded in 2005 by international children's rights advocate Cheryl Perera, we believe all children--the world's largest voiceless minority--must be free from all forms of exploitation and free to positively contribute to matters that affect us. Using the peer-to-peer leadership model, we engage fellow young people, including child survivors of commercial sexual exploitation in a global partnership through public education campaigns, advocacy initiatives and support to rehabilitation and reintegration efforts.

OneChild knows that when young people are given the knowledge and the know-how, they are a force to be reckoned with. And we've seen it. Young people *are* turning the tables on one of the greatest crimes against humanity in our time.

But we can do more...much more. That's why during the next several months, Cheryl Perera will be spreading OneChild's message of a world fit for children to youth themselves in Ontario high schools. Traditionally, the honourarium to have Cheryl speak is \$2000 (excluding travel), however, thanks to the generous contributions of the Starbucks Foundation and the International Youth Foundation, OneChild is offering this inaugural tour free of cost to your school. We believe that this tour evokes a very powerful and important message of change and solidarity that must be heard by every student.

## Specs

- 45 minute multimedia presentation to the entire student body, including an invitation to get involved with OneChild;
- Access to a youth-friendly hub for information on child sex slavery and how-to guides via the OneChild website;
- Access to guidance and support from OneChild in taking concrete action.



## Technical Requirements

- Microphone
- Speakers for laptop
- LCD projector
- White screen to project pictures/video

## Media

OneChild encourages schools to invite the media to cover the presentation. This coverage can generate important awareness about the commercial sexual exploitation of children, and your school's commitment to molding students into responsible, active citizens. Interviews with Cheryl Perera may be arranged according to her availability.

Please feel free to contact us with questions or inquire about available dates in your area.

**Trixie Perera**  
Information Officer  
1.905.886.2222  
info@onechild.ca

Cheryl Perera is an accomplished children's rights activist, a captivating speaker and the Founder and President of OneChild, the premiere organization empowering a movement of children and youth taking action against child sex slavery. Her extraordinary contributions to protect children, and her high innovation, achievement, and leadership have earned her honours such as the World of Children Founder's Award, and distinguished her as one of Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100, and Canada's Top 20 Under 20.



Cheryl became socially involved at age 16, after reading about the exploitation of children, for a high school project in her grade 10 Civics class. What she read filled her with anger, determination and resolve. Eager to take action, she traveled to her native country, Sri Lanka, in 2002, to investigate the exploitation of children. Wanting to get an insider's look into the child sex industry, she participated in a treacherous undercover operation, as the decoy—the main role of a 15 year-old child prostitute—that led to the successful apprehension of a 40 year-old child sex offender. Her breadth of knowledge and bravery attracted the attention of dignitaries, and she was recognized by the Sri Lankan Government, having been offered a placement of one year at the Presidential Secretariat to serve as the President's Nominee on Child Protection, at the age of 17.



These experiences led her to begin a unique education-driven initiative to mobilize the Canadian travel and tourism industry to take a stand against child sex tourism. What began as a one-child initiative grew to involve hundreds of Canadian youth. At age 19, she established OneChild and under her leadership, the youth succeeded in their negotiations with Air Canada, to screen their youth-created in-flight video warning against child sex tourism. The project was launched in 2005 on all domestic and international flights, as the only one of its kind in Canada and the second in North America, with a viewership of 22 million passengers to date.

Cheryl has overseen major partnerships with international organizations such as the Peoples Recovery, Empowerment and Development Assistance Foundation in the Philippines, and raised over \$180,000 to construct a rehabilitation centre, and offer support services, and administer remedial programs for children exploited in the sex industry. She has also traveled to many countries such as the United States, Nicaragua, Sri Lanka, Macedonia, Ecuador, Philippines, Kenya, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, Brazil, Egypt and the UK, meeting with and speaking out for the protection of children. A sought-after dynamic orator, she actively addresses UN organizations, government bodies, business groups, educators, students, service clubs, and the media on the importance of children's rights, social responsibility, and volunteerism. Cheryl has spoken to over 32,000 young people and adults, inspiring them to make a positive difference in the lives of their peers around the world. Her work has been profiled on CBC, Global TV, The Montel Williams Show and featured in various newspapers and magazines such as the National Post, The Financial Times of London, The Toronto Star, and Flare Magazine, among others.

Cheryl now 25, holds an Honours BA in Ethics, Society, and Law, and Political Science from the University of Toronto. A recipient of many prestigious national and international awards, Cheryl has broken tremendous ground to turn the tables on the child exploitation industry where few would dare to tread.



# MAJOR SPEECHES

Senate Committee against the Sexual Exploitation of Children & Youth  
Ottawa, Canada

Upper Canada College  
Toronto, Canada

2010 Global Young Leaders International Conference  
Virginia, USA

Shad Impact Conference  
Waterloo, Canada

2006 Annual Convention of the Canadian Catholic Women's League  
Toronto, Canada

University of Toronto  
Toronto, Canada

2010 International Forum on Child Welfare  
New York, USA

University of Guelph  
Guelph, Canada

2003 Conference on IT and Cross-Cultural Understanding  
Skopje, Macedonia

Canadian International Development Agency  
Ottawa, Canada

21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the UN World Tourism Organization Task Force to Protect Children from Sexual Exploitation  
London, UK

Queen's University  
Kingston, Canada

2006 Breakfast Conference for the Women's Executive Network  
Toronto, Canada

2006 World of Children  
Ohio, USA

2009 International Conference on Child Rights  
Ottawa, Canada

2006 Canada's Top 20 Under 20 Awards  
Toronto, Canada

2010 International Forum *End Human Trafficking Now, Enforcing the UN Protocol*  
Luxor, Egypt

University of Waterloo  
Waterloo, Canada



"We were so thankful for your attendance at our inaugural conference and were truly moved by your words during your speech. From the enormously positive feedback we received from our delegates, we weren't the only ones! Your message is one so important, and yet one so seldom heard being discussed among the student body, that we feel it crucial to allow it the chance to be heeded once again ."

-Ayaz Kurji, student, Queen's University

"I have attended a number of events where Cheryl was featured as a speaker. It is astounding that she has achieved so much at such a young age. Attendees at all events were captivated and many approached her afterwards, wanting to hear more about her experiences. A gifted speaker, Cheryl has a uniquely energetic speaking style that mesmerizes audiences with her message of youth leadership and stimulates young people to make a positive difference in the world. I can recommend her with great confidence."

-Peter Dudding, Chief Executive Director, Child Welfare League of Canada

"Cheryl has the passion to move audiences. When she speaks she has stories to tell and she tells them with the passion of first person experiences. Cheryl is much in demand as a public speaker and when she speaks people listen. She usually receives a standing ovation at the conclusion of each address."

-Dolina Smith, Past President, Canadians Addressing Sexual Exploitation

"She met the educational goals of the keynote event and helped us further educate, motivate and inspire hundreds of scholars by sharing her message. As a young, dynamic, international speaker, Ms. Perera would be an inspiration to a variety of audiences sharing her first-hand experiences and lessons learned starting from a simple need for more information to building an organization that works to educate and act against the global sex trade of children."

-Whitney Hickman, Speaker Coordinator, Congressional Youth Leadership Council, USA



OneChild Network and Support Inc.  
20 Apple Creek Blvd., Unit A1 Suite 124  
Markham, Ontario  
L3R 5Z1  
Canada

1.905.886.2222  
info@onechild.ca  
www.onechild.ca