

# Teen joins the fight against trafficking

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Age is no barrier to activism.

When Ottawa native Sherry Wang, 14, heard slavery still exists, it never occurred to her to wait until she grew up to learn more, speak out and advocate for the abolishment of human trafficking and slavery.

"I think that age doesn't really matter in doing what's right," Wang said. "Anyone, it doesn't matter what age, can definitely make a difference."

On Sunday, which is End Slavery Day, Wang is emceeding Speak Out: Youth Against Slavery, a conference organized by PACT-Ottawa (Persons Against the Crime of Trafficking in humans). Taking place at the Bronson Centre from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., this is PACT's fifth annual conference to raise awareness about modern-day slavery and gather people together to advocate for change.

According to the United Nations, an estimated one to four million people are trafficked each year, including children who are forced into involuntary labour or sexual exploitation.

"I was actually quite surprised, not really knowing that slavery still goes on, especially in Ottawa," Wang said. "After hearing about this I really wanted to help out in some way to stop this."

Sunday's conference will include a talk from a PACT representative and a keynote address by Sunny Marriner, founder of one of Ottawa's first programs working with sexually exploited girls and young women.

Participants will also be divided into small groups, going to different booths to explore topics ranging from the role social media plays in human trafficking, services available for victims of trafficking and slavery and the role of local law enforcement.

There will also be a bake sale, door prizes and performances by the Holy Trinity Catholic High School Jazz Ensemble and local musician Sarah Dalby.

"Everyone needs to be informed (about human trafficking and slavery) and it doesn't matter what age, everyone should be informed," Wang said. "If everyone is informed of this then everyone can participate and help and stop this."

For more information, see [pact-ottawa.org](http://pact-ottawa.org).

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