

HUMAN TRAFFICKING BASICS

What Is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking has three core elements:

- 1) The action of trafficking means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons.
- 2) The means of trafficking includes threat of or use of force, deception, coercion, abuse of power or position of vulnerability. However, it is not necessary to demonstrate force, fraud, or coercion in sex trafficking cases involving children under the age of 18.
- 3) The purpose of trafficking is always exploitation. At a minimum, this exploitation happens through sexual exploitation, forced labor and services, slavery, servitude, or the removal of organs.

Who Are the Victims?

Anyone of any age or gender can be a victim of human trafficking. According to the U.N., every year approximately 600,000 to 800,000 victims are trafficked across international borders worldwide. Victims of human trafficking include foreign nationals and U.S. citizens, adults and minors, all genders and identities. 80% of victims are women and 50% are children.

Who Are the Traffickers?

Human traffickers are slave traders. They deceive their victims by offering them the hope of a better life, employment, educational opportunities or marriage. Violence is often involved and victims are often subjected to debt-bondage, usually under the pretext of an exaggerated debt that resulted from the provision of basic needs. Traffickers often threaten victims with personal injury or death, or the safety of the victims' families. Also, traffickers commonly take away the victims' identification and communication devices, isolating them to and making escape more difficult.

What Causes Contribute to Human Trafficking?

Poverty and inequality are important factors in making people more vulnerable to being trafficked but are rarely the primary causes. Trafficking is a criminal industry driven by 1) large profits and 2) the low risk of prosecution. As long as the demand is high and the risks are low, trafficking will exist regardless of other contributing factors.



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Why Do Victims Stay with Their Traffickers?

Traffickers are able to keep victims through a number of means. Some of these include language barriers, fear of traffickers, and fear of law enforcement.

Myths and Truths about Human Trafficking

Myth - Human trafficking only happens outside of the United States.

Truth - Human trafficking happens in every country, including the United States.

Myth - Human trafficking and human smuggling are the same.

Truth - "Trafficking" is based on exploitation and does not require movement across borders. "Smuggling" is based on movement and involves moving a person across a country's border with that person's consent in violation of immigration laws.

Reporting

- To report suspected human trafficking to federal law enforcement: 1 (866) 347-2423.
- To get help from the National Human Trafficking Hotline: 1 (888) 373-7888. Or text "HELP" or "INFO" to BeFree (233733)

Resources

<https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/what-human-trafficking>

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/faqs.html#What is human trafficking>

https://www.itemp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ITEMP_Basic_Fact_Sheet.pdf?f0a460&f0a460

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/protocoltraffickinginpersons.aspx>

<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/type-trafficking/human-trafficking>

