



HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS

Human trafficking is a form of modern day slavery that involves controlling a person through force, fraud or coercion to exploit the victim. Traffickers may recruit, harbor or transport a victim in order to exploit them for labor, sexual exploitation or both.

Did you know?

- In the past five years, 89 million people experienced some form of modern slavery for periods of time ranging from a few days to the whole five years
- 1 in 4 victims of modern slavery are children
- 76% of transactions for sex with underage girls are conducted via the internet
- 1 in 3 runaway youth are lured into prostitution within 48 hours
- Human trafficking is a federal crime and is the second largest criminal industry
- Human trafficking victims have been identified in all 50 states
- The internet has changed things. 76% of transactions or sex with underage girls are conducted online

MISCONCEPTIONS

- Sex trafficking and prostitution are not the same thing – although all child prostitution is human trafficking
- Victims can easily seek help or leave unsafe/unfair situations - many victims may not feel safe to do so or lack courage due to manipulation and psychological control by traffickers
- Human smuggling and human trafficking are not the same thing – Human trafficking crimes do not require any smuggling or movement of the victim
- Trafficking victims are not all destitute individuals – they come from all income levels, all ethnic groups, all races of people.
- Human trafficking does not discriminate

VICTIMS

- Anyone can be a victim
- 15 - 17 is the average age of a victim
- Only 9% of human trafficking perpetrators are strangers
- Males and females of all races, ethnicities and socioeconomic levels
- Victims are often lured by false promise of relationship
- Many victims are often hidden in plain sight and/or may not realize they are being exploited

TRAFFICKERS

- Traffickers can be anyone: males, females, a fellow classmate, friend, family, someone you met online, boy girlfriend, pimps, gangs, family members, employers, employers of domestic servants, and/or small business owners
- Traffickers use various methods to trap vulnerable individuals such as violence, threats, fraud, coercion, blackmail, false promises, deception, manipulation, and debt bondage
- Traffickers employ a variety of control tactics, including physical and emotional abuse, sexual assault, confiscation of identification and money, isolation from friends and family, and even renaming victims
- Act alone or part of a larger network

SIGNS

- Inability to speak to individuals alone
- Submissive or fearful
- Avoids eye contact
- Living with their employer
- Employer holding identity documents
- Unpaid or paid very little
- Sexually explicit profiles on social media
- Possession of multiple hotel keys
- Signs of branding (tattoo, scars)
- Presence of an older boyfriend
- Expresses need to pay off debt
- Prepaid cell phones

RECRUITMENT TACTICS

- Grooming by providing expensive items
- Grooming by fulfilling emotional needs (spending time, listening, giving compliments)
- Peer pressure
- Using pictures, personal information or anything that might cause fear of embarrassment or getting in trouble with family, school, law, etc.
- Online recruitment through social media (comments on posts, sends private message, etc.)
- Offering help such as a place to stay or a job
- Blackmail (pictures, personal information or anything else that might cause fear of embarrassment or getting in trouble with family, law, etc.)

PREVENTION

- Teach children to trust their instincts – if something feels wrong, it probably is. If something seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- Model healthy relationship behaviors for your children
- Parents can teach children at a very young age about physical touch and what is appropriate or inappropriate. Children should be taught what kind of touch is acceptable, what to do if someone tries to hurt them, and that it is okay to talk about anything that makes them “feel” uncomfortable
- Monitor social media and internet usage
- Human sexuality is not openly discussed in many American households, yet the topic is glaringly present in all aspects of media seen by kids and teens on a daily basis. These are difficult waters for a child to navigate alone.
- Discuss various situations at different familiar locations- sports practice, walking to a friend’s house, outdoor festivals, Halloween, at the mall, movie theater, etc.
- Reduce demand for commercial sex


PROTECTIVE FACTORS:

- Postive self-esteem
- School or community connectedness
- Active parenting
- Positive friendships and peer groups
- Positive adult role models
- Extra-curricular activities

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILDREN

- What would you do if a good looking older guy came up to you and said he thought you were pretty enough to be a model?
- Would you give him your phone number?
- Is it ok for a stranger to take pictures of you?
- Have you ever known someone at school that had an older boyfriend?
- Have any of your friends ever talked about getting paid to go on dates?
- Do you know what sexting is?
- Has anyone ever sent you a picture that made you feel uncomfortable?
- What would you do if someone sent you an inappropriate picture or asked you for one?

How to Report a Tip

 **Call 713.222.TIPS (8477)**

 **Use our Mobile App**
Download app name: Crime Stoppers Houston

 Go to crime-stoppers.org

Human trafficking is defined as a form of abuse or neglect:

- > All individuals have a duty to immediately report suspected and/or disclosed abuse or neglect
- > Educational professionals must report within 48 hours