

Human Trafficking is Modern-Day Slavery

It involves the exploitation of someone for the purpose of compelled labor or commercial sex acts through the use of force, fraud, or coercion.

If a person younger than 18 is induced to engage in a sexual act for money or something else of value, it is a crime regardless of whether there is any force, fraud, or coercion.

Victims can be anyone from around the world or right next door: women and men, adults and children, U.S. citizens and noncitizens. Some populations are at higher risk for human trafficking, including victims of other forms of violence, disconnected youth, and racial and ethnic minorities. Some of the methods traffickers use to compel their victims into commercial sex or forced labor include:

- **Force** - Rape, beatings, confinement
- **Fraud** - False offers of employment, love, marriage, better life
- **Coercion** - Threats of serious harm, debt-bondage, climate of fear, abuse of legal system

In An Emergency Call 911

National Human Trafficking Hotline:
(888) 373-7888

District Attorney's Office
Human Trafficking Team
(831) 454-2560
HThelp@santacruzcounty.us



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*"To promote and ensure public safety
through ethical and just prosecution"*

Understanding Victims of Human Trafficking

Understanding the mindset and fears of human trafficking victims is important when trying to overcome common barriers to victim identification.

Many victims may not see themselves as victims, know that what is being done to them is wrong, or seek help due to several factors including:

- Confinement, monitored movements, use and threat of violence
- Fear, shame, self-blame, hopelessness
- Traumatic bonding and loyalty to the trafficker
- Language and social barriers
- Distrust of law enforcement or service providers
- Facilitated drug addiction and forced engagement in illegal activities
- Debt bondage
- Lack of awareness of available resources and legal protection
- Normalization of exploitation

Gaining the trust of a victim of human trafficking is an important first step in providing assistance.

Victims of Trafficking Can Be Found In

- Brothels, massage parlors, strip clubs
- Street prostitution, truck stops, online
- Domestic service, nannies, elder care
- Construction, landscaping
- Farms, ranches, fisheries
- Manufacturing, factories
- Hotels, hospitality industry
- Restaurants, other food services
- Bars, spas, salons
- Sales crews, peddling, begging rings

Identifying Victims of Human Trafficking

Victims of trafficking do not often disclose their trafficking situation or may not know that they are a victim of trafficking.

It is crucial for service providers and community members to assess potential safety risks, use trauma-informed practices, and create a safe and non-judgmental space to identify trafficking indicators and assist a potential victim.

Identifying Victims of Human Trafficking (cont.)

- Is the person accompanied by another person who does not let them speak for themselves, seems controlling, or interprets for them?
- Is the person unwilling or hesitant to engage in conversation?
- Can you detect any physical or psychological abuse or neglect?
- Does the person seem submissive, nervous, fearful, or hostile?
- Is the person under the age of 18 and engaged in commercial sex?
- Is the person unaware of location and time?
- Is the person in possession of his/her money, identification, or other personal items?

Knowing what clues to look for and what questions to ask can help you identify potential human trafficking victims.