



HUMAN

TRAFFICKING

Preventing Human Trafficking

Created by the Human Trafficking Prevention Program

rwjbh.org/endtrafficking

RWJBarnabas
HEALTH

Institute for
Prevention
and Recovery

What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is defined as the use of force, fraud or coercion to compel an individual to provide labor or services or commercial sex acts. Human trafficking is a crime that can occur across international borders, within a single country, county or home. Trafficking survivors can be people of any age, race, gender identity or socioeconomic status. Traffickers can be individuals, neighbors, friends, family members or part of organized crime.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. § 7102(11)(B)) defines two primary forms of human trafficking: sex trafficking and labor trafficking:

Sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud or coercion or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age.

- Sex trafficking can appear under the guise of sex work, pornography, child sexual abuse images, exotic dancing and more.
- Force, fraud or coercion do not have to be present with minors (those under 18 years old) under the law in order to be considered sex trafficking.

Forced labor is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery.

- Forced labor and labor trafficking can be present in agriculture, construction, domestic work, salons and massage parlors, packing/processing plants, hotels/motels, mining and more.

Human Trafficking vs. Human Smuggling

Human trafficking and human smuggling are two distinct crimes in federal law. Human smuggling occurs when an individual is transported illegally across the border, with or without their consent.

- **Consent:** Individuals may consent to be smuggled, while those who are trafficked have been forced against their will. Not all cases of human smuggling are consensual. In some situations, consent may be lacking, or smugglers may entice individuals to enter a country under false promises – which may lead to trafficking.
- **Purpose:** In cases of smuggling, the interaction is complete once they have been moved. Those who are trafficked continue to be exploited.
- **Borders:** Smuggling always has to cross borders. Trafficking can occur within a state, community or home.
- **Crime:** Smuggling is a crime against the country or state, while trafficking is a crime against the individual.

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Facts and Statistics



Human trafficking is present everywhere in the United States. New Jersey is considered a hub for human trafficking due to its dense population and proximity to New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore. The top five states for human trafficking in the U.S are California, Texas, Florida, New York and Ohio. Each year, an estimated 199,000 incidents of human trafficking occur around the world. In 2019, 11,500 cases of human trafficking were reported in the United States.

New Jersey Statistics

- In 2021, New Jersey had 151 total cases, or 1.62 cases per 100,000 people.
- In 2023, NJ Covenant House, a statewide human trafficking service provider, served 180 clients in their Human Trafficking Victim Service program and served 149 known survivors of human trafficking through their services.

National Statistics

- The National Human Trafficking Hotline has identified 82,301 cases of human trafficking with 164,839 survivors identified since its inception.
 - In 2021, 10,359 cases of human trafficking were reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, involving 16,554 individuals.
- **The states with the highest number of reported cases of human trafficking in 2020 are:**
 - California: 1,334 reported cases
 - Texas: 987 reported cases
 - Florida: 738 reported cases
- **The states with the highest rates of human trafficking in 2020 are:**
 - Mississippi: 6.31 cases per 100,000 population
 - Nevada: 5.99 cases per 100,000 population
 - Missouri: 4.34 cases per 100,000 population
 - District of Columbia- 4.14 cases per 100,000

Sources:

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National Human Trafficking Hotline. (n.d.). Statistics. Polaris. <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en/statistics>.

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<https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/human-trafficking-statistics-by-state>.

Covenant House New Jersey. (2023). FY23 CH New Jersey statewide impact report.

<https://covenanthousenj.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/FY23-CH-New-Jersey-Statewide-Impact-Report.pdf>.

Warning Signs

One of these warning signs alone may not indicate human trafficking, but recognizing unusual or out of normal behavior for a person is an important step to identifying signs of trauma and potential incidents of trafficking.

Physical

- Signs of abuse and injuries
- Looking malnourished
- Having tattoos/branding (symbols, barcodes, names, etc.)

Possessions

- Having a sudden increase in expensive clothing or jewelry without reason
- Extreme, unexplained increase in money
- Lacking identification documents

Lack of Control

- Accompanied by someone who is controlling their movements
- Not able to speak freely
- Not being in possession of their own money

Behavior

- Fearful
- Unable to speak for themselves
- Evidence of a controlling relationship (especially those with an older partner)

Isolation

- Disconnected from family and friends
- Less engaged in school/activities
- Withdrawn from sports/social activities

Warning Signs: Sex Trafficking

- Youth is under 18 and engaging in commercial sex acts
- Has a romantic partner/pimp/manager that is controlling
- Is escorted at all times and not allowed to go anywhere alone
- Dressed inappropriately for age, situation or weather

Warning Signs: Labor Trafficking

- Working extremely long hours and/or is not allowed breaks
- Having increasing debt or is unable to pay off debt
- Living and working in the same place with poor conditions
- Being recruited with false promises/fake job offers
- Not being paid or being paid very little

Sources:

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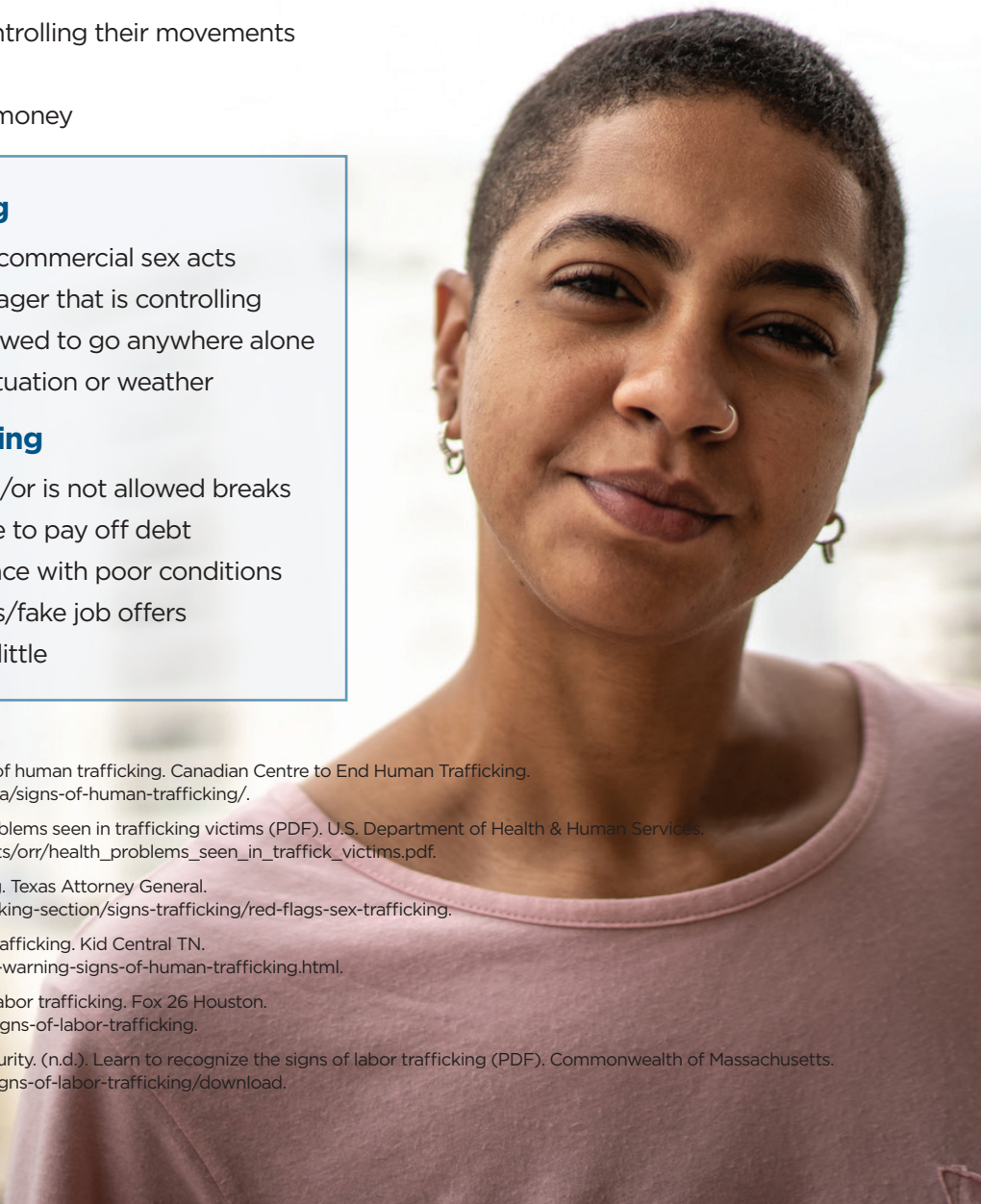
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Grooming and Human Trafficking

Grooming is the process that traffickers use to gain access and trust to the individuals they choose to exploit. Traffickers can pose as intimate partners, job recruiters and other trusted roles. Traffickers may use platforms like social media, dating websites/apps, gaming platforms and online chat rooms to begin the grooming process. Recognizing this process is critical for preventing trafficking, implementing intervention services and providing trauma-informed practices.

Stages of Grooming

- 1. Target the individual.** Traffickers and groomers select individuals based on perceived vulnerabilities like isolation, low self-esteem, lack of parental supervision and more. This can be done through social media using fake profiles or in person. Groomers and traffickers may also target children within their family/friend circle.
- 2. Gain access and begin building trust.** Traffickers will do and say anything to build trust and a relationship with the individual. This can involve compliments, gifts, attention or support.
- 3. Fill a need.** The groomer is able to identify a physical or emotional need for the individual and begins to fill that need to build the relationship and foster loyalty and dependence. This could involve money, drugs, shelter or emotional support.
- 4. Isolate either physically, emotionally or both.** Physical isolation can include moving away from family and friends. Emotional isolation can include manipulating the individual to distrust loved ones. Isolation increases the control a groomer and trafficker has on an individual.
- 5. Exploit either through sexual exploitation or labor trafficking.** Sexual exploitation can include posting an ad online for services or coercing the individual into performing unwanted sexual acts. Labor trafficking occurs when the individual is compelled to work or provide services.
- 6. Maintain control.** By using force, fraud and/or coercion, groomers and traffickers are able to maintain control of the individuals over a continued length of time.

Quick Statistics

65%

of reported trafficking cases in 2021 were recruited online.

45%

of trafficked individuals are trafficked by a family member and 40% are trafficked by an intimate partner.

90%

of children who are sexually abused in the U.S are abused by someone they know (family, friends, neighbors, babysitters, etc.).

90%

of commercial sexual exploitation of children starts within the individual's home and is perpetrated by a family member or friend.

Around
90%

of young children who are exploited are trafficked by an adult family member.

Sources:

Set Me Free Project. (2023). Set Me Free Project READY to Stand Curriculum. Omaha.

Chapko, R. (2024, March 21). Unraveling the stages of grooming - national child protection task force. National Child Protection Task Force - Help us protect #justonemore. <https://ncptf.org/unraveling-the-stages-of-grooming/>.

Trustworthy People

Human trafficking can happen with friends, family, neighbors, intimate partners and others that the individual may know. Teaching youth and adults the characteristics of a trustworthy person can help them recognize the people in their lives that help form healthy, happy relationships. While talking to youth about stranger danger is still important, traffickers are more likely to be people familiar to the individuals being trafficked. Consequently, teaching what a trustworthy person looks like is crucial for the safety of young people.



“A trustworthy person will

Never ask you to do something illegal.

Never ask you to go against your moral compass.

Never ask you to keep a secret from a parent or guardian.

Always want the best for you.”

Source:

Set Me Free Project. (2023). Set Me Free Project READY to Stand Curriculum. Omaha

Trauma in Human Trafficking

Human trafficking survivors experience traumatic events that can have long-lasting impacts on their mental health. Those who are trafficked may experience high rates of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety and other mental health challenges. Understanding the complex trauma that survivors may experience is the first step in helping them on their path to recovery.

PTSD Symptoms:

Avoidance and numbing	Avoid discussing event(s)
	Emotional numbness
	Averse to activities done in the past
Intrusive memories	Flashbacks
	Disturbing dreams
Anxiety and emotions	Anger and irritability
	Guilt and shame
	Substance use and destructive behaviors
	Easily startled
	Extreme cases: suicidal or violent

Source: <https://www.dresseember.org/blog/dresseemberday13>

Potential Long-Term Challenges Resulting from Human Trafficking

- Difficulty establishing trust with people, providers and law enforcement due to past trauma and abuse.
- Shame and stigma act as a barrier preventing survivors from seeking mental health care.
- Lack of education caused by disruptions to their schooling which can lead to lower employment.
- Records of crimes that were committed while trafficking which can contribute to barriers to employment and housing.

Holistic, trauma-informed approaches are necessary to the recovery of survivors of human trafficking and overcoming the barriers to care. A trauma-informed approach considers the effects of trauma on the physical and emotional well-being of individuals.

Sources:

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. (2021). Treating hidden wounds: Trauma treatment and mental health recovery for victims of human trafficking. <https://aspe.hhs.gov/reports/treating-hidden-wounds-trauma-treatment-mental-health-recovery-victims-human-trafficking-0>.

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Human Trafficking Disclosures

When an individual shares that they are experiencing human trafficking or have experienced human trafficking it is important to report, prioritize safety and respond in a way that promotes support. Below are tips to work toward supporting survivors of human trafficking.

Reporting

- Call 911 immediately if someone is in danger.
- Contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline or NJ Covenant House
 - Call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at **1-888-373-7888**
 - Call NJ Covenant House at **862-240-2453**
- When reporting, document and detail as many specifics as possible, including descriptions of individuals and vehicles, license plate numbers, location and warning signs you have seen.

Prioritize Safety

- Do not confront the trafficker directly.
- If someone discloses they are being trafficked and would like assistance, help move them to a safe location and contact the authorities.
- Avoid drawing attention to the potential trafficker.

Responding to Survivors

- Approach the survivor without judgment. Assure them that the abuse is not their fault.
- Use a trauma-informed lens. Understand that human trafficking is complex and causes trauma that can impact the survivor in all aspects that may be difficult to understand.
- Allow the survivor to have autonomy over the next steps that they take.
- Believe the survivor's story. Remember, due to the impact of trauma, their stories may change and their memory may not be linear.
- Limit the amount of times that the survivor tells their story. Coming forward can be incredibly difficult, so strive to ensure they are able to do so as comfortably as possible.
- Remind the survivor that they can always say "no." They are in control of the situation.

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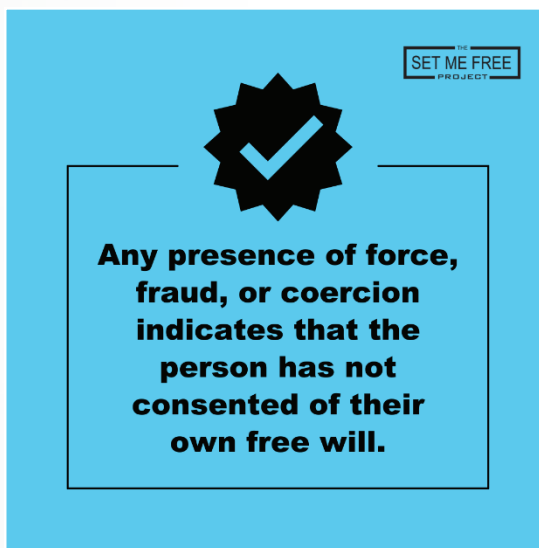
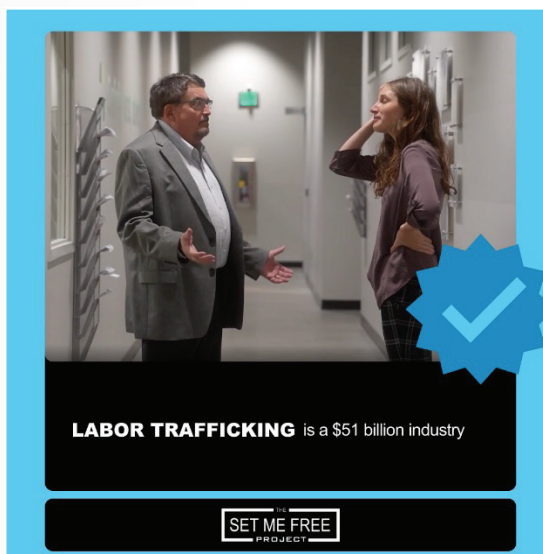
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National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center. (n.d.). Trauma-informed care. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. https://nhhtac.acf.hhs.gov/soar/eguide/respond/Trauma_Informed_Care.



Social Media Post

Youth often consume social media on a daily basis. To spread awareness and education about human trafficking each person and organization can post about the issue on social media. The Set Me Free Project has downloadable social posts and resources you can use. Please visit their website by scanning the QR code below to view their selection of downloadable resources.



Scan the QR Code or visit setmefreeproject.net/human-trafficking-prevention-toolkit to view or download social media posts and flyers from the Set Me Free Project.

Human Trafficking Resources

National Human Trafficking Hotline

24/7 Confidential

Call **1-888-373-7888** | Text **233733**

Chat humantraffickinghotline.org/en/chat

Covenant House New Jersey

Open 24/7. All Services are free. Services include call center, case management, case coordination and more

If you or someone you know may be human trafficked call **862-240-2453**

NJ Coalition Against Human Trafficking

Human Trafficking Education Programming
safernj.org

Set Me Free Project

Works to prevent human trafficking before it starts through education programs

setmefreeproject.net

RWJBarnabas Health Hospitals

If you or someone you may know are experiencing trafficking, visit RWJBarnabas Health Hospitals to connect with resources in your area.

Clara Maass Medical Center

1 Clara Maass Drive, Belleville, NJ

973-450-2000

Community Medical Center

99 Highway 37 West, Toms River, NJ

732-557-8000

Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center

94 Old Short Hills Road. Livingston, NJ

973-322-5000

Jersey City Medical Center

355 Grand Street, Jersey City, NJ

201-915-2000

Monmouth Medical Center

300 Second Ave, Long Branch, NJ

732-222-5200

Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus

600 River Avenue, Lakewood, NJ

732-363-1900

Newark Beth Israel Medical Center

201 Lyons Avenue at Osborne Terrace, Newark, NJ

973-926-7000

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital New Brunswick

1 Robert Wood Johnson Place, New Brunswick, NJ

732-828-3000

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton

1 Hamilton Health Place, Hamilton, NJ

609-586-7900

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Rahway

865 Stone Street, Rahway, NJ

732-381-4200

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset

110 Rehill Avenue, Somerville, NJ

908-685-2200

Trinitas Regional Medical Center

225 Williamson Street, Elizabeth, NJ

908-994-5000

655 E. Jersey Street, Elizabeth, NJ

908-994-5000

Resources

- Administration for Children & Families. (2018). Health problems seen in trafficking victims (PDF). U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/orr/health_problems_seen_in_traffick_victims.pdf.
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