

Human trafficking is slavery, and it's worse today than at any point in history. There are more than 30 million slaves in the world today, in both forced labor and sex trafficking.

What is labor trafficking?

The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery. (Trafficking Victims Protection Act)

What is sex trafficking?

The recruitment, harboring, transportation or obtaining of a person for a commercial sex act (including pornography and stripping) in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age (Trafficking Victims Protection Act).

National Sex Trafficking Statistics

- An estimated \$10 billion industry in America.
- An estimated 100,000 - 300,000 child victims of human trafficking in the U.S. alone.
- 70% of DMST victims experienced physical or sexual abuse in their homes.
- The average age of entry for boys and girls is 11-14.
- 1.68 million American children run away each year.

Who is being trafficked?

While any child is susceptible to trafficking, traffickers typically prey on individuals who are vulnerable in some way because they are the easiest to manipulate.

Common Vulnerabilities

- **Age.** Younger children are easier to manipulate, and there's a growing demand for their exploitation.
- **Runaway and homeless.** Studies show that runaways are often approached by a trafficker within days of leaving home.
- **Living below poverty line.** Traffickers manipulate a victim's desires for a "better life" in order to exploit them. In many cross-border cases, victims follow the promise of a good job only to find themselves in the grip of a trafficker.
- **Physical or sexual abuse at home.** Many victims are more susceptible to a trafficker's manipulation because of a previous history of abuse from family members.
- **Gang involvement or drug abuse.** Often, victims join a gang and are forced to perform sexually for gang members or become drug dependent, with their pimps as the suppliers.
- **Older boyfriend.** Traffickers often play the role of a "boyfriend" or "lover" as they groom younger girls, then later manipulate or coerce them into prostitution.
- **Psychological or emotional difficulties.** Victims who show low self-esteem or are having trouble at home are often targeted by traffickers.

Waco

- Location on I-35 gives access to Dallas and Houston, two of the top estimated trafficking cities in the U.S.
- Estimated 30% poverty rate.
- 10% of students in Waco ISD are homeless.
- 90% Waco ISD students at or below poverty level.
- 30-50 online sex advertisements of estimated minors in Waco per week.

(Sources: Global Slavery Index, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, U.S. Dept. of State, Shared Hope International, U.S. Census Bureau, Waco ISD)

Recognizing the Signs

From the National Human Trafficking Resource Center

Common Work and Living Conditions:

- Not free to leave or come and go as he/she wishes
- Is in the commercial sex industry and has a pimp / manager
- Is in the commercial sex industry and is under 18 years old
- Is unpaid or paid very little for his/her work
- Owes a large, increasing debt he/she is unable to pay
- Was recruited through false promises concerning the nature and conditions of his/her work
- High security measures exist in the work and/or living locations (e.g. opaque windows, boarded up windows, bars on windows, barbed wire, security cameras, etc.)
- Is fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid
- Exhibits unusually fearful or anxious behavior after bringing up law enforcement
- Avoids eye contact

Poor Physical Health:

- Lacks medical care and/or is denied medical services by employer
- Appears malnourished or shows signs of repeated exposure to harmful chemicals
- Shows signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, or torture

Lack of Control:

- Has few or no personal possessions
- Is not in control of his/her own money, no financial records, or bank account
- Is not in control of his/her own identification documents (ID or passport)
- Is not allowed or able to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating)

Other:

- Claims of just visiting and inability to clarify where he/she is staying/address
- Lack of knowledge of whereabouts and/or of what city he/she is in
- Loss of sense of time
- Has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story

Note: According to federal law, any minor under the age of 18 engaging in commercial sex is a victim of sex trafficking, regardless of the presence of force, fraud, or coercion.

Reporting Human Trafficking

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center: 1-888-373-7888
To report suspected human trafficking or to be connected to local resources, contact the NHTRC.

The toll-free hotline is available 24/7 to receive tips and serve survivors and victims of human trafficking all around the country. With more than 200 languages available, the hotline is equipped to connect individuals with critical support and services.

Waco Police Department

In all emergency situations, call 911 or your local law enforcement agency.

- Crimes Against Children: **254-752-2600**
- For Adults & After-Hours Calls: **254-750-7500** or **911**

The Department of Homeland Security

To report suspected human trafficking, call DHS.

1-866-347-2423

The Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children (Waco)

To access resources for victims, call the Crisis Hotline.

The Victims Center Hotline: **254-752-7233** or toll free at **888-867-7233** (available 24/7 for crisis intervention)

Texas Abuse Hotline

If you ever suspect a child is being abused, neglected or exploited, make a report.

Hotline: **1-800-252-5400**

Online: **www.txabusehotline.org**

UnBound

For more information or to talk to someone about suspected local human trafficking, contact UnBound.

- Website: **www.UnBoundNow.org**
- Weekday: **254-754-0386 ext. 134**
- Night and weekends: **254-230-0872**