

TRAFFICKFREE

TRAFFICKFREE.ORG

who we are

Traffick Free is an anti-human trafficking organization that seeks to raise awareness of human trafficking through education and community outreach.

The organization has transformed from providing direct-services to victims and survivors, to providing free education and training for social service providers, law enforcement agencies, communities, and several other industries.

learning objectives

1. Discuss the different forms of human trafficking.
2. Learn to identify potential victims and those at-risk of sex trafficking.
3. Apply strategies and best practices to support sex trafficking victims and survivors.

What is human trafficking?

forms of
human
trafficking
commonly
discussed



Sex trafficking



Labor trafficking



Domestic servitude

Forms of Labor Trafficking - according to Polaris

- domestic servitude
- traveling sales crews
- carnivals
- recreational facilities (e.g., amusement parks, summer camps)
- healthcare, primarily in nursing homes and home health care
- factories and manufacturing
- agriculture and animal husbandry (breeding and caring for farm animals)
- forestry and logging
- landscaping
- construction
- commercial cleaning services
- health and beauty services
- hotels and hospitality
- restaurants and food service
- arts and entertainment (i.e., modeling, athletics)
- peddling and begging

Forms of Sex Trafficking - according to Polaris

- escort services
- outdoor solicitation
- bars, strip clubs and cantinas
- illicit massage, health and beauty
- residential brothels
- pornography (rates higher for male victims in this form vs. other forms of exploitation of males for sex trafficking) *and other forms of online exploitation*
- personal sexual servitude (high rates of vulnerability for young people who experience homelessness and LGBTQ+ minors)

Voluntary vs. Involuntary

- Sex work vs. sex trafficking has many caveats, they are not as siloed as society believes.
- Avoid placing a label on someone's experience; let them define it.
- Every situation is different and involves different variables:
 - Age
 - Choice
 - Experience

Sex Trafficking - involves a person forcing, frauding or coercing* another person for sex or sexual acts. The person being trafficked does not consent to these acts, and they are under the control of their trafficker. The person trafficked is usually not fairly compensated and is often physically and/or psychologically abused by their trafficker as a form of manipulation and control, making it incredibly difficult for the person to leave. *This does not need to be proven for individuals engaged in commercial sex if they are under 18 years old.*

Sex Work – involves someone choosing to participate in sex work. This person is not controlled by someone else (a trafficker), has control over their work schedule and finances, and does not experience abuse by a controlling third party. They are also able to freely stop participating in sex work at their discretion/desire.

Note : *many adult sex workers were once children who were trafficked. They may have even escaped trafficking but returned to sex work due to the severe impact being trafficked has on a person. They also may find sex work a necessary way to provide for themselves. This is commonly referred to as “survival sex”*

Do you think you have already worked
with someone who has been a victim of
human trafficking?

Trafficking in Illinois

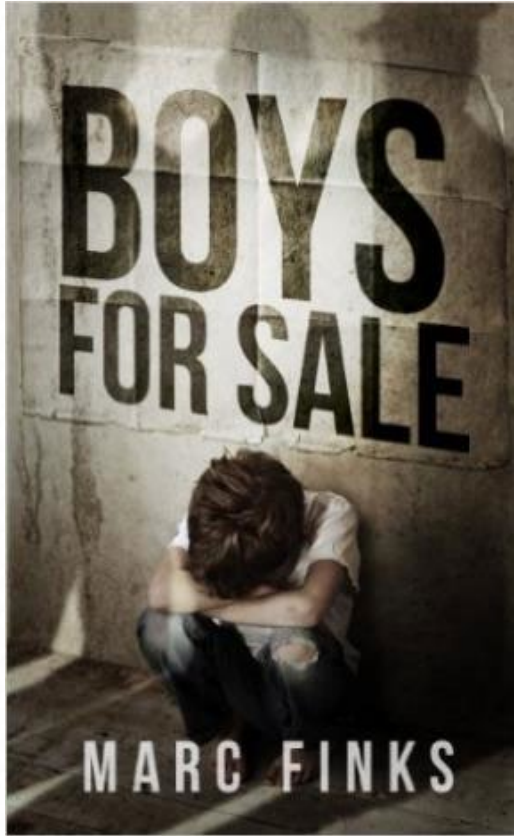
- As of 2017, Illinois ranks **11th** in the nation for the number of **reported** trafficking cases.
- *"I can't emphasize enough to you. There is literally no end to the number of victims we come across. So we're just overwhelmed,"* Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart said in October 2023.
- There are **hundreds of ads** , **updated almost every minute** , on sites like ListCrawler and MegaPersonals, used by traffickers to take advantage of victims.
- **Illinois Human Trafficking Task Force Report, from 2011 -2017:**
 - 970 children were trafficked
 - The average age of trafficked children is 13.89
 - 87% are female children
 - 53% are African American
 - 42% are White

Trafficking Facts & Data



At Risk Groups

- Females
- Women of color
- Youth/Minors
- Youth experiencing homelessness
- LGBTQ+ youth
- Youth in the foster care system
- Youth who have experienced sexual abuse



Are only females trafficked?

Statistics for victimization of men, boys, and transgender individuals are hard to find but populations we cannot ignore.

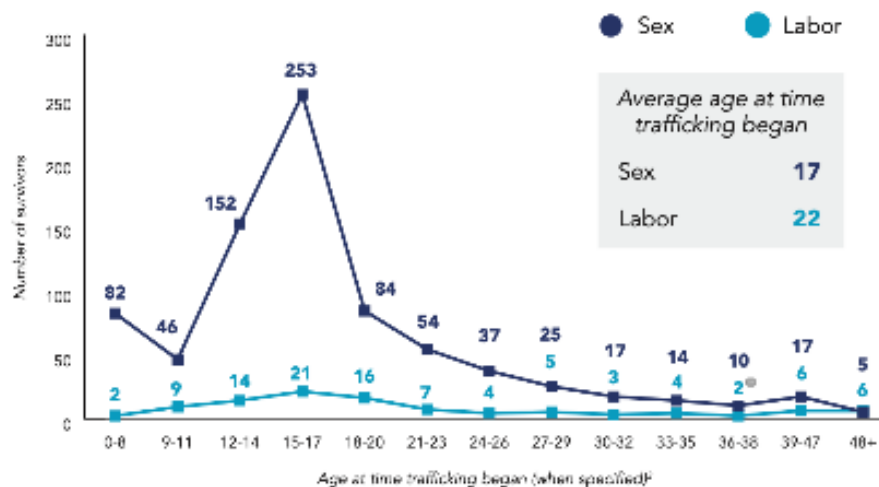
Lack of services for males and transgender individuals lead to a heightened risk for re-exploitation.

Does this just impact minors?



Adult **1,435**
Minor **5,359**
Unknown **15,532**

Age at Time Sex or Labor Trafficking Began



¹Exact age at the time the trafficking began is known for only 4% of the trafficking victims and survivors in this data set.

Polaris Project 2019 Statistics

Young people at risk for recruitment:

- Under 18 years old
- Own or have access to a computer, tablet, or smartphone
- Want to fit in with their peers
- Desire to develop romantic relationships
- Are attracted to consumer goods
- Sometimes feel insecure/misunderstood
- Fight with their parents/feel their parents don't care
- Want more independence
- Test boundaries and take risks

Tactics of Traffickers

- Traffickers may consist of family members, peers, and “significant others.” Traffickers are both male & female.
- There is often a hierarchy/structure to how traffickers operate.
- Majority of victims go through a recruitment and grooming process.
- Traffickers are master manipulators:
 - They exploit a potential victim’s emotional or financial needs.
 - They will likely first build a relationship with a victim.



IDENTIFYING VICTIMS

What indicators could
you be looking for?

identifying victims

- Sexually exploited children may have been trained to **lie about their age** . Sometimes a child's appearance and/or actions can contradict the information they give. Be sensitive to **clues in behavior or appearance that could indicate that a child is underage**.
- **Personal information** – such as: age, name, and/or date of birth – **might change** with each telling of his or her story, or the **information given might contradict itself**.
- **Has no identification** or is not in control of his or her identification documents.
- A tattoo that they are reluctant to explain may be the result of tattooing or **branding by a trafficker** . Traffickers may **tattoo or brand their victims** , they are commonly branded with their exploiter's name tattooed on the neck, chest, or arms.

identifying victims

- **Physical and sexual violence** are the everyday reality of many sexually exploited individuals and may leave **visible signs of abuse**, such as: unexplained bruises, blackeyes, cuts, or marks.
- Exhibit **behaviors** including fear, anxiety, depression, submission, tension, and/or nervousness.
- Exhibit “hyper-vigilance” or **paranoid behavior**.
- Sexually exploited children/youth **often express interest in**, or are **in relationships** with, adults or older men.
- Evidence of **controlling/dominating relationships**, including: repeated phone calls from a “boyfriend” and/or excessive concern about displeasing partner.

identifying victims

- **Unexplained** shopping trips or possession of expensive clothing, jewelry, or a cell phone could indicate the manipulation of an exploiter.
- **Not** in control of their own money.
- Use of **lingo or slang** from “the life/the game.”
 - **Daddy/Manager** - term referencing a trafficker.
 - **Quota** - amount a victim must earn for their trafficker.
 - **Turnout** - when a trafficker puts someone out to work for the first time.
 - **Track/Stroll** - a street location for commercial sex.
 - **Twelve (12)** - police officer(s).

identifying victims

- Wearing **new clothes** of any style, seemingly provocative or not, or getting **hair** or **nails** done **with no financial means** to this independently, is a general indicator of potential sexual exploitation.
- Not making direct **eye contact** .
- Youth who are frequently reported as **missing** .
- Youth who seem to **meet** a lot of their “**friends**” **online**.
- **Truancy or tardiness** from school.

Questions to Ask

If you encounter a **potential victim** and it is **safe** to engage in conversation with them (*typically meaning they are not being watched or monitored by their trafficker*), **consider asking:**

- Can you come and go as you please?
- Have you been hurt or threatened if you tried to leave?
- Has your family been threatened?
- Do you live with your employer?
- Do you have a safe place to sleep and eat?
- Are you in debt to your employer?
- Do you have access to your passport/identification? If not, who has it?

Steps to Help a Survivor

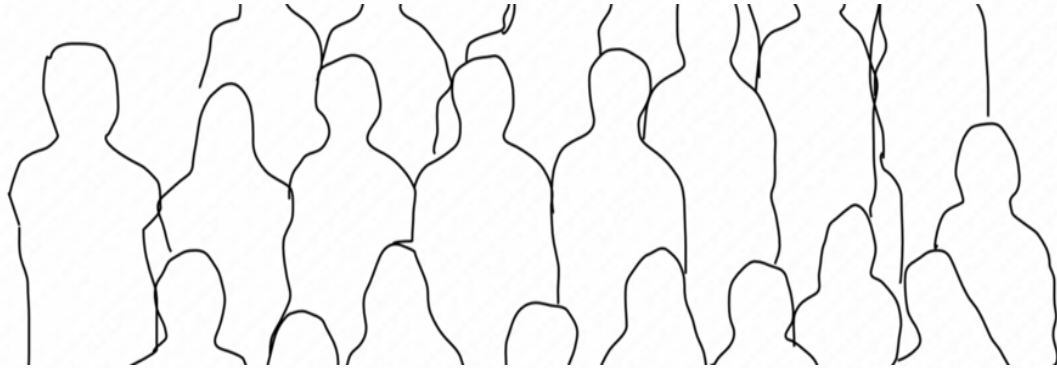
Minors

- Call DCFS and law enforcement.
- Any minor involved in sex trafficking is automatically considered a victim and DCFS and law enforcement need to be contacted.

Adults

- Be prepared with resources and referrals.
- Listen to what they want to do, follow their lead.
- If they decide to go after a sex trafficker or buyer, include law enforcement.
- Offer a Victim Specialist to assist with the legal process:
 - Legal Aid Chicago, Life Span

IMPACT OF TRAFFICKING ON SURVIVORS



trauma bonding

- **A connection** between an abused person and their abuser.
- Develops out of a **repeated cycle** of abuse and positive reinforcement.
- Typically creates **powerful feelings** the victim struggles to make sense of.
- The victim will try to justify or **defend the abuse**.
- Believe if they even think a disloyal thought, trafficker will know and **retaliate** .
- **Shame** and **stigma** associated with prostitution, rape, and losing virginity increases bonding.

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL IMPACT

- Disruption of healthy psychological development
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Self-injuries and suicidal behavior
- Dissociative disorders
- Sleep disturbance & nightmares
- Clinical depression
- Explosive outbursts
- Bond with perpetrators
- Hyper-sexualization
- Anxiety
- Paranoia

EMOTIONAL & SPIRITUAL IMPACT

- Anger and rage
- Deep emotional pain/grieving
- Feelings of humiliation/shame
- Stigma of exploitation
- Self-blame/self-loathing
- Loss of sexual desire, feelings, or response
- Despair
- Hopelessness
- Lack of belief in humanity
- Lack of faith in spiritual power

PHYSICAL IMPACT

- Continuous physical abuse
- Rape & gang rape
- STDs & STIs
- HIV & AIDS
- Loss of bowel control
- Pregnancy (wanted and unwanted)
- Sterility
- Facial/dental reconstruction
- Tattoos & branding
- Brain damage
- Substance use/addiction
- Self-harm
- Suicide/Death

SOCIAL IMPACT



- Isolation from peer group
- Disconnection from community
- Isolation from mainstream society
- Homelessness
- Incarceration/criminal record as obstacle
- Lack of life skills
- Trust issues/difficulty maintaining relationships

WORKING WITH VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS



Working with Victims and Survivors


Don't	Do
You are safe now	We will do everything we can to keep you safe
No one here will hurt you	We are not working with the people who hurt you and took advantage of you. We are here because we want to help you
Coming to us and working with us will help you	We are here because we want to do our best to help you and protect you (and your family).
You are a victim, not a criminal	The people who did this to you are criminals and deserve to be punished. You were mistreated and your rights were violated. You did not deserve this.
You can trust me.	<i>Trust is established through actions.</i>
We want to make sure what happened to you does not happen to anyone else.	<i>AVOID. It can be victim blaming. The onus should never be put on the victim to prevent future crimes or violence against others.</i>

DO NOT expect the individual to **recognize their situation as exploitative** , or to present themselves as a victim in need of immediate intervention or rescuing.




DO meet a sexually exploited person where they are and on their terms, and **try to meet the needs they present** .

DO NOT use strategies that **switch intermittently** between treating the individual as an offender and as a victim.



DO recognize the various **symptoms of trauma** exhibited and **coping mechanisms** used by a victim.

DO NOT react verbally or physically in a way that communicates **disgust** or **disdain** .




DO be **nonjudgmental** when listening to a sexually exploited individual.

DO NOT dispute facts or comment on an individual's motivation. This is likely to stop the flow of information

DO keep the individual **talking** and make him or her feel comfortable.

Do **not** make assumptions about an individual's past, sexuality, or gender-identification.

DON'T assume sole responsibility for meeting the **myriad needs** of victims and survivors.



DO improve a systematic response to sexual exploitation by creating interagency relationships to comprehensively meet victims' needs.



Emergency & Legal Resources

National Trafficking Hotline

888-373-7888

Salvation Army STOP -IT Program

24-hour assistance: 877 -606-3158

Cook County Sheriff's Office: SVU Victim Services Hotline

708-865-4949

- Cabrini Green Legal Aide
- Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation (CAASE)
- Chicago Coalition for the Homeless (The Law Project)
- Cook County State's Attorney's Office
- Life Span
- Legal Aid Chicago
- National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC)

Metro 2-1-1



METRO CHICAGO

Connecting People and Services

<https://211metrochicago.org/>

- A free, easy-to-access helpline for Chicago and suburban Cook County
- An information and referral resource, helping connect people to food, housing, utility payment assistance, health care, transportation, childcare, employment, mental health, disaster information and assistance, and more
- A go-to resource for any essential health and social service needs, using comprehensive, accurate information, and delivering a user-friendly experience

Local Shelters & Programs

Programs Supporting Women and Girls

[Magdalene House](#)

[Naomi's House](#)

[Salt & Light Coalition](#)

[Ernestine's Daughter](#)

[Cherish House \(for minors\)](#)

[Reclaim 13 \(for minors\)](#)

[Shelter Inc.](#)

Programs Supporting Men and Boys

[Emmaus](#)

Additional Shelter

[The Night Ministry](#)

Scan the QR code to access
Traffick Free's Resource Page!



Advocating for Victims and Survivors

- **Watch the language used around you (e.g. “pimped out”)**
- Know your “slavery footprint” (slaveryfootprint.org)
- **Know where your products come from**
- Support organizations that are survivor-led or survivor-informed
- Use your skill set to volunteer or offer services for survivors
- **See survivors as leaders of their own lives and not as the trauma they survived (*i.e. when inviting a survivor to speak or be interviewed*)**
- Get to know who your representatives are at the city, county, state and federal level – you may be asked to advocate directly to your legislators on behalf of victims and survivors

Questions?

Gina Parisi, MSW
Executive Director
gina@traffickfree.org

www.traffickfree.org
www.facebook.com/traffickfree
www.instagram.com/traffickfree