



HUMAN TRAFFICKING
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Human Trafficking Training: Identifying Victims

Labor and Sex Trafficking Signs:

- Common Work and Living Conditions: The Individual(s) in Question
- Is not free to leave or come and go as he/she wishes
- Is under 18 and is providing commercial sex acts
- Is in the commercial sex industry and has a pimp / manager
- Is unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips
- Works excessively long and/or unusual hours
- Is not allowed breaks or suffers under unusual restrictions at work
- Owes a large debt and is unable to pay it off
- 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.)
- Poor Mental Health or Abnormal Behavior
- 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 health care
- Appears malnourished
- 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)
- Claims of just visiting and inability to clarify where he/she is staying/address
- Lack of knowledge of whereabouts and/or do not know what city he/she is in
- Loss of sense of time
- Has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story



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Labor trafficking patterns include:

- Victims are often kept isolated to prevent them from getting help. Their activities are restricted and are typically watched, escorted or guarded by associates of traffickers. Traffickers may "coach" them to answer questions with a cover story about being a student or tourist.
- Victims may be blackmailed by traffickers using the victim's status as an undocumented alien or their participation in an "illegal" industry. By threatening to report them to law enforcement or immigration officials, traffickers keep victims compliant.
- People who are trafficked often come from unstable and economically devastated places as traffickers frequently identify vulnerable populations characterized by oppression, high rates of illiteracy, little social mobility and few economic opportunities.
- Women and children are overwhelmingly trafficked in labor arenas because of their relative lack of power, social marginalization, and their overall status as compared to men.

This list is not exhaustive and represents only a selection of possible indicators. Also, the red flags in this list may not be present in all trafficking cases and are not cumulative.

Learn more at www.traffickingresourcecenter.org. Credit: **Polaris Project**

Child Labor and Sex Trafficking Signs:

- A history of childhood neglect, abuse and/or trauma, particularly youth sexual abuse (or involved in Foster Care)
- Difficult relationships with caregivers
- Family history of substance abuse and criminal activity
- Involvement in abusive or violent dating relationships
- Being homeless and/or a runaway
- Living in a shelter or group home, foster home,
- Knowing peers or family members who are involved in sex trafficking
- Branding/tattoos
- Risky sexual behaviors
- Isolation from peers, friends and family members
- Mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, ADHD and chronic stress



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Social workers may come across many victims with one or more of these risk factors or indicators:

- Youth may have multiple cell phones
- Goes through prominent changes in appearance
- Hair and nails done
- Having expensive items that they don't have money to afford
- Withdrawing from usual group of friends
- Only spending time with a partner
- Words that victims may use: the game, bottom, stable, daddy

Possible Situations to Look For:

- A young girl who is with someone who is older, partying and/or romantically involved and that person seems to be in charge of where she goes, what she does and who she talks to.
- Someone who appears to be soliciting for prostitution (majority are sex trafficked, even though they may claim to be on their own.)
- Those dressed in a provocative way, are exceptionally flirty and repeatedly check in with someone else on a cell phone or in person.
- Someone who seems to have a bodyguard, or friends watching from a distance.
- Someone who is avoiding normal eye contact with others, unless soliciting
- Someone who acts a bit skittish, fearful, or appears drugged or drunk
- Many people coming and going from a single hotel room at all hours
- Teens who are trying to appear as adults and carry and present fake ID
- Physical appearance shows signs of injuries, abuse or torture.