

Trafficking of Youth with Disabilities

What Providers Serving Youth with Disabilities Need to Know

Presented by

Jody Haskin, MA, Program Director, IOFA

Jae Jin Pak, Self Advocate, Project Coordinator,
IOFA



international organization for adolescents

Meet the Presenters



Jae Jin Pak

Project Coordinator

**International Organization
for Adolescents (IOFA)**



Jody Haskin

Program Director

**International Organization
for Adolescents (IOFA)**

The Trafficking of Youth with Disabilities Outreach & Education Project

- ▶ **International Organization for Adolescents (IOFA)**
- ▶ **National Human Trafficking & Disabilities Working Group (NHTDWG)**



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Learning Objectives

Participants will be introduced to:

- ▶ What human trafficking is
- ▶ How youth with disabilities may be impacted by human trafficking
- ▶ The **role of a provider** serving youth with disabilities in addressing human trafficking
- ▶ Ways to **identify and support** potential or confirmed youth survivors of human trafficking with disabilities

A Note on Youth, Children, & Minors



Why do providers serving youth with disabilities need to learn about human trafficking?



What Do You Know About Youth Trafficking? True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

STATEMENT 1

Human trafficking only takes place in large cities or in other countries

ANSWER:

FALSE - Human trafficking takes place all around the world, including throughout the United States, in cities, suburbs, and rural areas

What Do You Know About Youth Trafficking?

Part 2

True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

STATEMENT 2

In order to be considered trafficking, a person must be moved across a city, state, or country border.

ANSWER:

FALSE – Human trafficking does not require any movement

What Do You Know About Youth Trafficking?

Part 3

True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

STATEMENT 3

Most youth who experience trafficking were initially kidnapped by their trafficker.

ANSWER:

FALSE – Physically taking someone rarely happens in a trafficking situation.

What Do You Know About Youth Trafficking?

Part 4

True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

STATEMENT 4

Youth under the age of 18 who trade sex acts for something of value are considered victims of crime.

ANSWER:

TRUE – The crime of sex trafficking includes youth under the age of 18 who trade sex acts for something of value. These youth are a victim of a crime.

What is human trafficking?



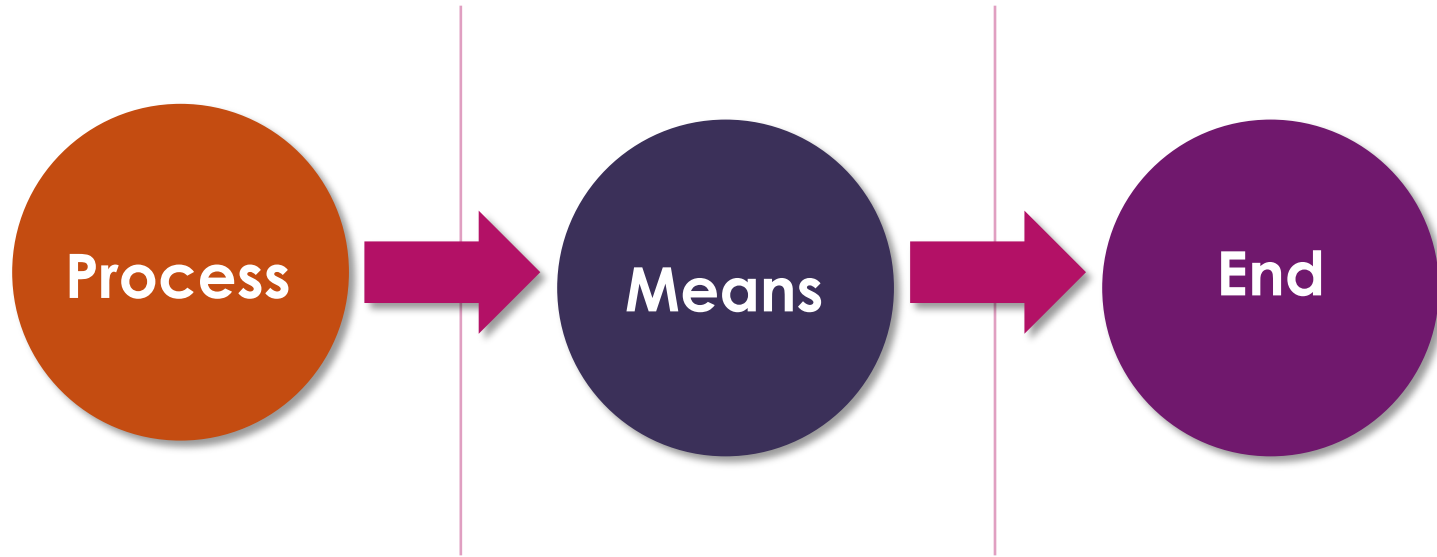
Definition of Human Trafficking

Federal Law: Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000

(A) Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by **force, fraud, or coercion**, or in which the person induced to perform the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt form such act **has not attained 18 years of age**; or

(B) The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion bondage, or slavery

Elements of Human Trafficking



Why are youth at risk for trafficking of sex and labor?

Why?

- ▶ Access to internet
- ▶ Desire to connect
- ▶ Feeling misunderstood
- ▶ Family conflict
- ▶ Crave independence
- ▶ Risk-taking behaviors
- ▶ Lack experience



While all youth may be targeted by traffickers... some groups are at **much higher risk**



Who is at higher risk?

- ▶ Undocumented
- ▶ Runaway & homeless
- ▶ **Youth with disabilities**
- ▶ LGBTQ+ youth
- ▶ Foster care/group homes
- ▶ Justice system/multiple placements
- ▶ Abuse & neglect
- ▶ Persons of color

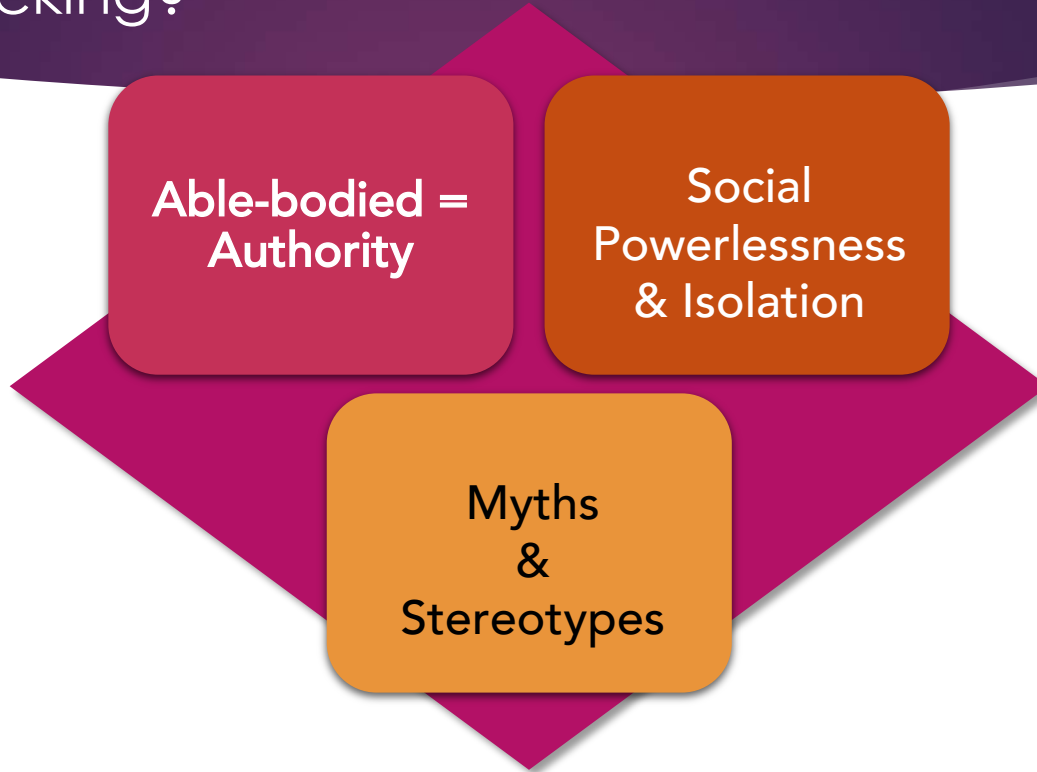
The Reality



Children with disabilities are **at least three times** more likely to be abused or neglected than their peers without disabilities¹

¹Lund, E. M., & Vaughn-Jensen, J. (2012). Victimization of children with disabilities. *The Lancet*, (380)9845, 867-869.

Why are youth with disabilities at higher risk for trafficking?



Risk Factor: **Gaps in Education**

Personal Safety

Online Safety

**Healthy
Relationships**

**Human
Trafficking**

Legal Rights

Value of Labor

**Traffickers
know
these gaps
exist, and
exploit that
fact.**

Risk Factor: **Gaps in Education**

Personal Safety

Risk Factor: **Gaps in Education**

Personal Safety

Topics for Teaching:

- Safe touch
- Body anatomy
- Physical boundaries
- Consent

Risk Factor: **Gaps in Education**

Online Safety

Risk Factor: **Gaps in Education**

Online Safety

Topics for Teaching:

- Passwords are private
- Keep Personal Information Personal
- Identifying inappropriate requests and behavior from online “friends”
- What images are appropriate to share

Risk Factor: **Gaps in Education**

**Healthy
Relationships**

Risk Factor: **Gaps in Education**

Healthy Relationships

Topics for Teaching:

- Red flags in friendships and physical relationships
- Correcting the myth that people with disabilities may not be interested in sex
- Stigma

Risk Factor: **Gaps in Education**

Human Trafficking

Risk Factor: **Gaps in Education**

Human Trafficking

Topics for Teaching:

- Definition of human trafficking as a crime
- Signs of human trafficking
- Reporting
- Ways to seek help

Risk Factor: **Gaps in Education**

Legal Rights

Risk Factor: **Gaps in Education**

Legal Rights

Topics for Teaching:

- Knowledge as empowerment
- Legal rights to education, supports, and rights of all people

Risk Factor: **Gaps in Education**

Value of Labor

Risk Factor: **Gaps in Education**

Value of Labor

Topics for Teaching:

- Labor laws
- Typical wages and what they legally must be paid
- What a typical work day looks like
- Knowledge of labor market
- How to interview

Risk Factor: **Supports**

Communication

**Assistive/Mobility
Devices**

Personal Care

Risk Factor: **Supports**

Educational

Housing

Benefits

Who Are the Traffickers?

A trafficker might be:

- ▶ Any gender or sex
- ▶ Any race or religion
- ▶ Any economic background
- ▶ Family members
- ▶ Religious leaders
- ▶ Authority figures
- ▶ **Someone the youth knows and trusts**

Traffickers Can Be **Anyone**

**Case
Example:**
Interfamilial
Trafficking



Grooming and Control of Youth with Disabilities

Grooming involves:

- ▶ Identifying youth
- ▶ Building rapport
- ▶ Gaining information
- ▶ Filling a need

Control involves:

- ▶ Social Isolation
- ▶ Physical Isolation
- ▶ Physical Harm
- ▶ Coercion
- ▶ Threats

Grooming of Youth with Disabilities



**Case
Example:**
Youth
Programs

Considering the Factors – What did you find?

Case Example – “Youth Programs”

Grooming Elements:

- Identify group home
- Identify struggling young men and befriend them
- Provide friendship and drugs

Control Elements:

- Provide drugs
- Threaten police involvement
- Force into debt bondage
- Withhold drugs

Youth Labor Trafficking: Putting it All Together

Case: Administrators

Process

Recruitment

Means

Fraud

End

Labor

Role of the Provider



Awareness



Identification



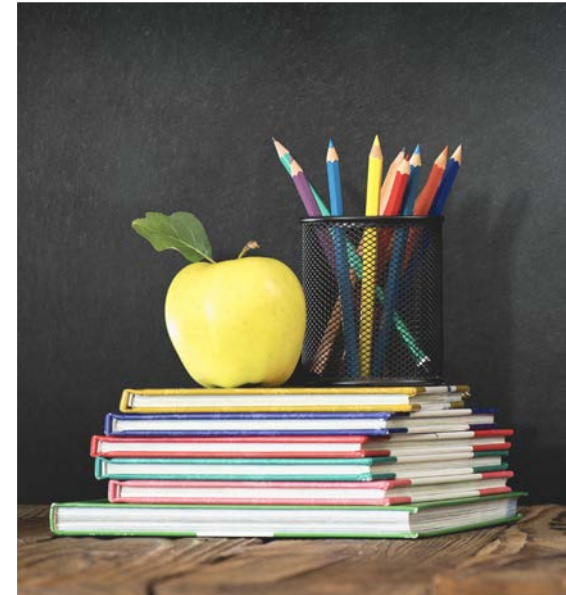
Follow Protocol/**Report**



Support & Referral

Disability Provider Role: **Prevention**

- ▶ **Educate** youth with disabilities on:
 - ▶ Personal and online safety
 - ▶ Healthy relationships
 - ▶ Human Trafficking
 - ▶ Legal rights
 - ▶ Value of their labor
- ▶ Share community **resources**



Disability Provider Role: **Identification**

- ▶ Understand **risk factors**
- ▶ Look for **red flags**
- ▶ **Disclose** to the youth that you are a mandated reporter

**Human
trafficking too
often goes
undetected!**

Red Flags of Human Trafficking in Youth

Red flags can be:

- ▶ Behavioral
- ▶ Physical
- ▶ Situational

IMPORTANT: What do you know about them already? And has something changed?

Red Flags of Human Trafficking in Youth

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IMPORTANT: What do you know about them already? And has something changed?

Red Flags of Human Trafficking in Youth

Behavioral

- ▶ Frequently missing school
- ▶ Reduced or changed communication
- ▶ Fear, exhaustion, or depression
- ▶ Sudden inability to perform tasks

Red Flags of Human Trafficking in Youth

Situational

- ▶ **Much older boyfriend/girlfriend**
- ▶ **Controlling friend, boss, partner**
- ▶ **Has new possessions or items of value that you may question**

Red Flags of Human Trafficking in Youth

Physical

- ▶ Unexplained injuries
- ▶ Untreated injuries
- ▶ Injuries related to exposure
- ▶ Frequent pregnancies/STIs/UTIs

Disability Provider Role: **Follow Protocol**

- ▶ **Safety** is first priority
- ▶ Explain **mandated reporting**
- ▶ Interpreters and supports ready **before** you need them
- ▶ Provide **choice** and autonomy
- ▶ Trauma-informed language and **take your time**

**Hotline for further
guidance.**

Disability Provider Role: **Support & Referral**

Know who to call in your community.



National Human Trafficking **Hotline**

Toll-free
Confidential
24/7
Interpreters
Available

Call: 1-888-373-7888
TTY: 711
Text: **HELP to** 233733 (Befree)
Web humantraffickinghotline.org

Resources for Healthcare Professionals

HEAL Network

❑ **Email** healtraffickingnow@gmail.com

❑ **Visit** <https://healtrafficking.org>

Resources and Trainings on Persons with Disabilities who Have Experienced Trafficking

National Human Trafficking and Disabilities Working Group

- **Email** nhtdwg@iofa.org
- **Visit** <http://iofa.org/national-trafficking-disabilities-working-group/>

We are
here to
help!



info@iofa.org

If you need assistance with:

Identifying Human Trafficking

Resources

Training

Technical Assistance

Contact info@iofa.org

Thank you to our partners

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