

Trafficking of Youth with Disabilities

What Providers Serving At-Risk Youth Need to Know

Presented by

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Meet the Presenters



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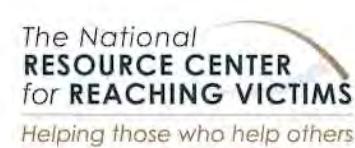
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The Trafficking of Youth with Disabilities Outreach & Education Project

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



This project was produced by the International Association for Adolescents under award #2016-XV-GX-K015, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this project are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Learning Objectives

Participants will gain an understanding of:

- ▶ The **role of a provider** serving youth with disabilities in addressing human trafficking
- ▶ Sex and labor trafficking
- ▶ Ways to **identify and support** potential or confirmed youth survivors of human trafficking with disabilities
- ▶ The **intersection** between human trafficking and disability

Why do providers serving at-risk youth need to learn about youth with disabilities and human trafficking?



Youth, Children, & Minors



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). Victimation of children with disabilities. *The Lancet*, (380)9845, 867-869. 7

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?



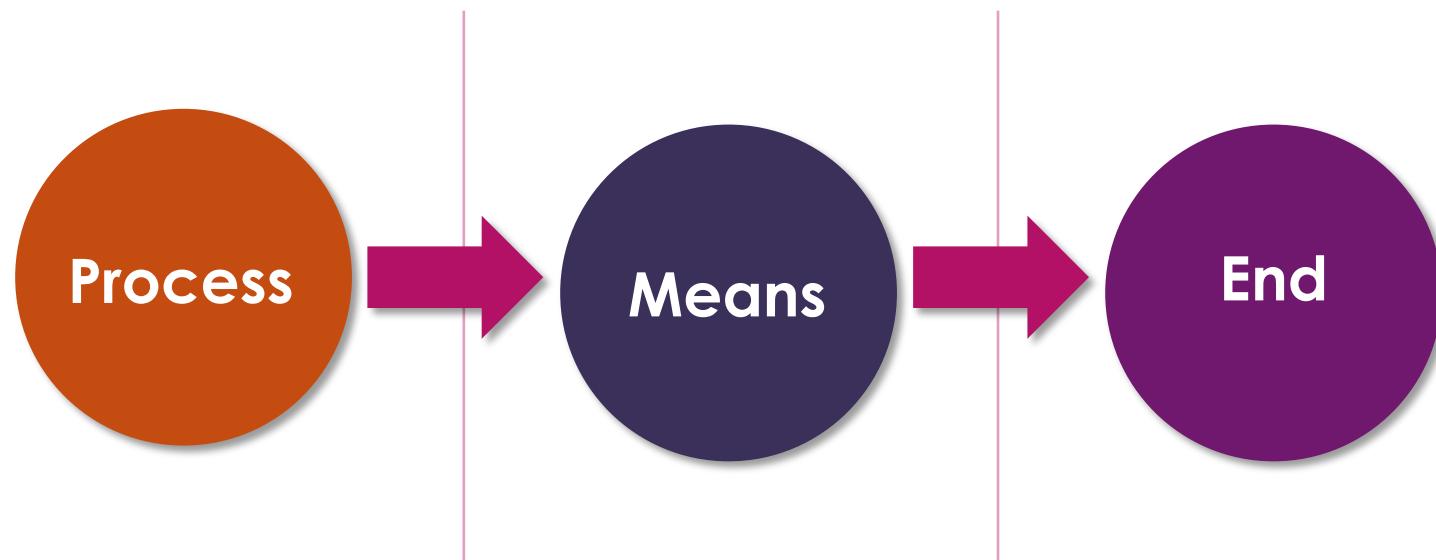
Definition of Human Trafficking

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



How do we **define** disability?

The ADA is the **legal** way to define disability.

- ▶ Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity
- ▶ Record of impairment
- ▶ Is regarded as having an impairment

How do we **define** disability?

This is **NOT** the only way to define disability.

The **social model of disability** considers the role our **attitudes and inaccessibility** have on functional differences.¹

¹Thomas, P., Gradwell, L., & Markham, N. (n.d.). [Defining impairment within the social model of disability](#).

Medical Model of Disability

Physical & Mobility

- **Movement** is functionally limited
- May use a mobility device (cane, wheelchair, walker)
- Examples: amputation, paralysis

Medical Model of Disability (2)

Sensory Impairment

- **One or more senses** are functionally limited
- May use an adaptive device (glasses, hearing aid)
- Examples: blindness, Deaf

Medical Model of Disability (3)

Developmental & Intellectual

- **Physicality, learning, behavior, or communication** may be functionally limited
- Needs will vary
- Examples: cerebral palsy, Autism

Medical Model of Disability

Mental & Emotional

- **Functional limitations vary**
- Needs will vary according to impairments
- Examples: mood, eating, personality, or behavioral disorders

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



All youth can be targeted by traffickers

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**



What traits indicate higher risk?

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

Why are youth with disabilities at higher risk for trafficking?

**Able-bodied
= Authority**

**Social
Powerlessness
& Isolation**

**Myths
&
Stereotypes**

Risk Factor: Gaps in Education

Personal Safety

Risk Factor: Gaps in Education

Online Safety

Risk Factor: Gaps in Education

**Healthy
Relationships**

Risk Factor: Gaps in Education

Human Trafficking

Risk Factor: Gaps in Education

Legal Rights

Risk Factor: Gaps in Education

Value of Labor

Risk Factor: **Supports**

Communication

**Assistive/Mobility
Devices**

Personal Care

Risk Factor: **Supports**

Educational

Housing

Benefits

Traffickers Can Be **Anyone**

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**



Recruitment of Youth with Disabilities

Traffickers recruit victims:

- ▶ Online
- ▶ Malls
- ▶ Schools
- ▶ Social Security offices
- ▶ Group homes/foster care
- ▶ After school/youth programs

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

Maintaining Control in Youth with Disabilities



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

Service 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

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
- ▶ Does not discuss work
- ▶ 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**

Contact the
National Human
Trafficking Hotline
for further
guidance.

At-Risk Youth Provider Role: **Support & Referral**

Know who to call in your community.



Supporting Youth with Disabilities

- ▶ Staff trainings
- ▶ Connect with community supports
- ▶ Acquire assistive technology
- ▶ Put myths and perceptions aside
- ▶ Ask to help. Wait for acceptance. Follow instructions
- ▶ Respect a person's equipment
- ▶ Accepting and welcoming tone

Community Supports: Centers for Independent Living



Find your local
Center for
Independent
Living

Community Supports: Protection & Advocacy Centers



More information,
about **Protection**
& Advocacy
Centers

Community Supports: Regional ADA Centers



More
information
about the
**Regional ADA
Centers**

Community Supports: Vocational Rehabilitation

To find your state's VR program, simply use any search engine and type: **“your state” + “vocational rehabilitation program”**



Community Supports: Advocacy Programs

Sibling Leadership Network

- ▶ Provide siblings of individuals with disabilities information, support, & tools
- ▶ Family resources

Community Supports: Advocacy Programs

ARC of U.S. and State Chapters

- ▶ Services, classes, & support for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- ▶ Research/resources

Community Supports: Advocacy Programs

Self Advocates Being Empowered (SABE)

- ▶ Advocacy services for people with all different types of disabilities
- ▶ Promotes self-advocacy

Anti-Trafficking Resources

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

Human Trafficking Resources Nationwide

Freedom Network USA

- **Call:** 202-504-9602
- **Email:** info@freedomnetworkusa.org

Resources and Trainings on Persons with Disabilities who Have Experienced Trafficking

National Human Trafficking and Disabilities

Working Group

- Email: nhtdwg@iofa.org

We are
here to
help!



international organization for adolescents

info@iofa.org

If you need assistance with:

Identifying Human Trafficking

Resources

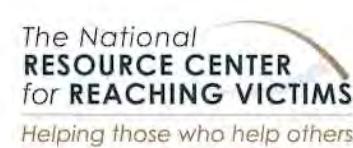
Training

Technical Assistance

Contact info@iofa.org

Thank you to our partners

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