

## Support for Victims of Human Trafficking

If you suspect someone is a victim of trafficking, call the **National Human Trafficking Resource Center** at **1.888.3737.888** to obtain information and to access supportive services through the Trafficking Victims Reauthorization Protection Act of 2000 (TVPRA). This hotline will help victims safely and securely rebuild their lives by connecting them to basic services including:

- Housing
- Health care
- Immigration assistance
- Food
- Income
- Employment
- Legal assistance

Victims of human trafficking who are non-U.S. citizens are eligible to receive benefits and services through the TVPRA to the same extent as refugees. Victims who are U.S. citizens are already eligible to receive many of these benefits.

**National Human Trafficking  
Resource Center:**

**1.888.3737.888**

For more information about  
human trafficking visit  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking).

## Understanding Victims of Human Trafficking

Understanding the mindset of human trafficking victims is important to helping them restore their lives.

Consider the following points when helping someone who could be a victim of human trafficking:

- Many victims do not speak English and do not understand American culture
- Some victims do not know what city or country they are in because they are often forced to move
- Most victims have a strong sense of distrust because they fear deportation
- Many victims do not see themselves as victims and do not realize what is being done to them is wrong

**Confidentiality is vital for victims of human trafficking. Enlist the help of a staff member who speaks the victim's language and understands the victim's culture.**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Administration for Children and Families



LOOK  
BE NEATH  
THE SURFACE



Can you recognize victims of human trafficking among the people you help everyday?

**As a social service provider,  
you can help liberate victims  
of human trafficking.**

## Human Trafficking is Modern-Day Slavery

Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery, widespread throughout the United States today. Trafficking of humans is the second largest criminal industry in the world after drug dealing, and is the fastest growing. Many victims of trafficking are made to engage in prostitution, pornography or exotic dancing.\* But trafficking also occurs in forms of labor exploitation, such as domestic servitude or restaurant work, sweatshop factory work or migrant agricultural work.

Force, fraud and coercion are the methods used by traffickers to press victims into lives of servitude and abuse:

- **Force** – Rape, beatings, confinement
- **Fraud** – False offers of employment, marriage, better life
- **Coercion** – Threats, debt-bondage, psychological abuse

### Victims of trafficking can be found in:

- Commercial sex
- Domestic situations (nannies or servants)
- Sweatshop factories
- Construction
- Farming or landscaping
- Fisheries
- Hotel or tourist industries
- Panhandling
- Janitorial services
- Restaurant services

## Identifying Victims of Human Trafficking

Victims of trafficking may look like many of the people coming to your organization for assistance everyday. Victims are young children, teenagers, men and women. By looking beneath the surface and asking yourself these questions, you can help identify potential victims:

- **Is the person accompanied by another person who seems controlling (possibly the trafficker)?**
- **Is the person rarely allowed in public (except for work)?**
- **Can you detect any physical or psychological abuse?**
- **Does the person seem submissive or fearful?**
- **Does the person have difficulty communicating because of language or cultural barriers?**
- **Does the person lack identification or documentation?**
- **Is someone else collecting the person's pay or holding their money for "safe keeping"?**

**Gaining the trust of a victim of human trafficking is an important first step in providing assistance.**

\*Any child engaged in commercial sex is a victim of trafficking.

## Sample Questions to Ask Potential Victims of Human Trafficking

If you get the opportunity to speak to or question the person alone, asking the following questions can help you determine if you are dealing with a victim:

- Can you leave your job or situation if you want?
- Can you come and go as you please?
- Have you been threatened if you try to leave?
- Has anyone threatened your family?
- What are your working or living conditions like?
- Where do you sleep and eat?
- Do you have to ask permission to eat, sleep or go to the bathroom?
- Is there a lock on your door so you cannot get out?
- Does someone prohibit you from socializing or attending religious services?

**Before questioning a person who may be a victim of human trafficking, discretely separate the person from the individual accompanying her/him, since this person could be the trafficker posing as a spouse, other family member or employer.**

