

MYTH

VS

REALITY



Traffickers target victims they don't know.



Many survivors have been trafficked by romantic partners, including spouses, and by family members, including parents.



People in active trafficking situations always want help getting out



Every trafficking situation is unique, and self-identification as a trafficking victim or survivor happens along a continuum. Fear, isolation, guilt, shame, misplaced loyalty and expert manipulation are among the many factors that may keep a person from seeking help or identifying as a victim even if they are, in fact, being actively trafficked.



Human trafficking is always a violent crime that involves kidnapping or physical force.



In reality, most traffickers use psychological means such as, tricking, defrauding, manipulating or threatening victims into providing commercial sex or exploitative labor situations.

If you believe you have encountered a victim of human trafficking, **call the national hotline:**

888.373.7888

If you have a reason to believe a person is in immediate danger, **call 911 first.**

CONTACT

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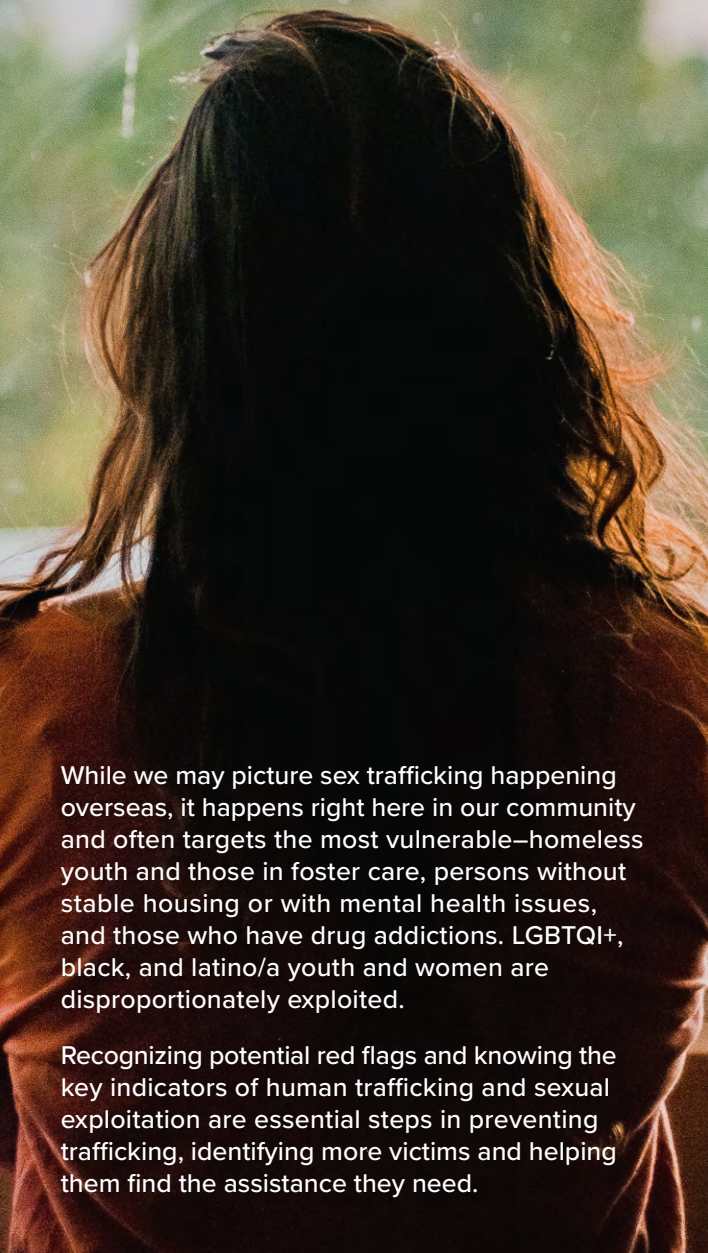
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HUMAN TRAFFICKING

IN THE UNITED STATES



Human trafficking is defined as the buying and selling of men, woman and children to perform sexual acts against their will and are held captive by an owner, who uses their body as a money-making object.



While we may picture sex trafficking happening overseas, it happens right here in our community and often targets the most vulnerable—homeless youth and those in foster care, persons without stable housing or with mental health issues, and those who have drug addictions. LGBTQI+, black, and latino/a youth and women are disproportionately exploited.

Recognizing potential red flags and knowing the key indicators of human trafficking and sexual exploitation are essential steps in preventing trafficking, identifying more victims and helping them find the assistance they need.

A TRAFFICKED PERSON COULD SHOW ONE OR MORE OF THESE RED FLAGS:

- Isolation
- Avoids eye contact
- Unable to confirm personal plans, speak independently
- Unusual tattoos (“daddy,” “cash,” a number)
- Unexpected income; suddenly acquires new possessions unexplainably or from older boyfriend
- Able-bodied but never leaves home without an escort
- Is frightened to talk to authorities or strangers; they are closely monitored and controlled
- Is not in control of their own money or identification documents
- Has a boyfriend or girlfriend that is noticeably older
- Has inconsistencies in their story of where they are from or where they are staying. They don’t know their address or lack knowledge of their current whereabouts
- Seems to live and work at the same place
- Is fearful, depressed, nervous, and has anxious behavior, especially around men
- May have scars or bruises on their arms and lower backs
- Untreated medical problems
- Is suspicious and distrustful of people who offer them help or assistance
- Works excessively long or unusual hours
- The places where they live or work have high measures of security: opaque windows, boarded-up windows, bars on windows, and security cameras
- Victims may demonstrate affection towards abuser (refers to boyfriend as “daddy”)
- Owes a large debt and is unable to pay it off.



With children or teens, pay attention if you notice sudden changes of behavior, especially withdrawal, fear, isolation, anger and depression. Are they suddenly spending more time online? Do they have a much older boyfriend or girlfriend? Do they have expensive new items without explanation (electronics, clothing, shoes, jewelry)?