

FAQS:

While awareness about modern slavery is growing, many people think that it is a third world problem or an issue that only affects the poor. The first step to dispelling these common myths and exposing the reality is to be prepared to answer questions that your friends, family, and colleagues may ask you about human trafficking in the U.S.

Here are answers to some of the most frequently asked questions.

FAQ: Is human trafficking another word for smuggling?

Answer: **No.** There are many fundamental differences between the crimes of human trafficking and human smuggling. Both are entirely separate Federal crimes in the U.S. Most notably, smuggling is a crime against a country's borders, whereas human trafficking is a crime against a person. Also, while smuggling requires illegal border crossing, human trafficking involves commercial sex acts or labor or services that are induced through force, fraud, or coercion.

FAQ: Is trafficking a crime that must involve some form of travel, transportation, or movement across state or national borders?

Answer: **No.** Although the word 'trafficking' sounds like movement, the federal definition of trafficking does not require transportation. In other words, transportation may or may not be involved in the crime of human trafficking.

FAQ: Does physical violence have to be involved in human trafficking cases?

Answer: **No.** Under the federal law, an individual who uses physical or psychological violence to force someone into a labor or sex industry is considered a human trafficker. Therefore, while some victims experience beatings, rape, and other forms of physical violence, many victims are controlled by traffickers through psychological means, such as threats of violence, manipulation, and lies. In many cases, traffickers use a combination of direct violence and mental abuse.

It is important to note that for minors force, fraud, or coercion are not required elements of the crime, meaning that anyone under the age of 18 in the commercial sex industry is a sex trafficking victim.

FAQ: Under the Federal definition, are trafficking victims only foreign nationals or immigrants?

Answer: **No.** The Federal definition of human trafficking includes both U.S. citizens and foreign nationals – both are equally protected under the Federal trafficking law and have been since the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000. Human trafficking encompasses both transnational trafficking that crosses borders and domestic or internal trafficking that occurs within a country. Statistics about trafficking, estimates of the scope of trafficking, and descriptions of trafficking should be mindful to include both transnational and internal trafficking to be most accurate.

FAQ: Do victims always come from a low-income or poor background?

Answer: **No.** Trafficking victims can come from a range of backgrounds and many may come from middle and upper class families. Poverty is one of many factors that make individuals vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking.

FAQ: Who is at risk of becoming a victim of human trafficking?

Answer: Since trafficking victims can be rich or poor, men or women, adults or children, and foreign nationals or U.S. citizens, everyone is at risk for being trafficked. However, traffickers typically prey on individuals who are vulnerable in some way because they are easier to recruit and control. Some examples of high risk populations include undocumented migrants, runaways and at-risk youth, and oppressed or marginalized groups.

FAQ: Do victims of trafficking self-identify as a victim of a crime and ask for help immediately?

Answer: Often no. Victims of trafficking often do not see themselves as victims and seek help immediately, due to lack of trust, self-blame, or training by traffickers.

FAQ: Does human trafficking only occur in illegal underground industries?

Answer: While human trafficking occurs in illegal and underground markets, it can also occur in legal and legitimate settings. For example, common locations of trafficking include private homes, large fancy hotels, nail salons, restaurants, bars, and strip clubs.

FAQ: How is pimping a form of sex trafficking?

In the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, a severe form of sex trafficking is a crime in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion. Pimps, who are motivated by the opportunity to make money, sell women and

girls in the commercial sex industry by using numerous methods to gain control over their bodies and minds, including:

Force

- Beating and slapping
- Beating with objects (bat, tools, chains, belts, hangers, canes, cords)
- Burning
- Sexual assault
- Rape and gang rape
- Confinement and physical restraint

Fraud

- False promises
- Deceitful enticing and affectionate behavior
- Lying about working conditions
- Lying about the promise of a better life

Coercion

- Threats of serious harm or restraint
- Intimidation and humiliation
- Creating a climate of fear
- Intense manipulation
- Emotional abuse
- Creating dependency and fear of independence

FAQ: Are pimps managers who offer protection to women and girls in the sex industry and split the money earned through commercial sex acts?

Answer: No. Contrary to common perceptions, pimps do not offer protection, and they are not benevolent managers. Instead, pimps usually take **all** of the money and typically establish nightly monetary quotas that women and children are forced to earn in order to avoid violent repercussions. Pimps even “brand” those under their control with tattoos of their name to demonstrate ownership.

Links:

For more information and to find out what other CCAT/Polaris groups are doing go to
<http://ccatcoalition.web.aplus.net/>
<http://polarisproject.org/>

Related Issues:

To report trafficking:

Polaris Project's 24-hour Hotlines to report cases of human trafficking nationwide.

National Hotline (English): 1-866-US-TIPLINE (or 1-866-878-4754)

Korean Hotline: 1-888-976-5274

Spanish Hotline: -888-80-AYUDA