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# SLAVERY OUT OF THE SHADOWS:

SPOTLIGHT ON HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING

HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESOURCES  
FOR EDUCATORS



## WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery.

Federal law defines human trafficking as recruiting, providing, harboring, transporting, or obtaining by any means, any person for labor or services in violation of laws prohibiting, among other things, forced labor, involuntary servitude, peonage, and slavery.

State laws vary slightly from this definition. In Texas, the crime of trafficking of persons is “the use of force, fraud, or coercion against an individual to receive or benefit from labor or commercial sex acts.”

Any person—male or female, young or old, U.S. citizen or foreign national—can be a victim of human trafficking.

## WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking affects both adults and children, men and women, and people from all parts of Texas, the United States, and around the world.

There are four major types of trafficking:

1. **Adult Sex Trafficking** - Trafficking of adults for sex by force, fraud, or coercion in strip clubs, brothels, massage parlors, street prostitution, or internet prostitution.
2. **Adult Labor Trafficking** - Trafficking adults for labor by force, fraud, or coercion into industries, such as agriculture, food service, manufacturing, domestic servitude, or hospitality.
3. **Child Sex Trafficking** - Trafficking children, under the age of 18, by any means into the commercial sex industry. It can include prostitution, sex tourism, pornography, and performance in sexual acts.
4. **Child Labor Trafficking** - Trafficking children, under the age of 18, by force, fraud, or coercion into industries such as agriculture, food service, manufacturing, domestic servitude, or hospitality.

Human trafficking entails the exploitation of a person and does not require the movement of that person.

## WHO IS AT RISK?

While any person can be targeted in human trafficking schemes, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children, Youth and Families states that individuals in the following groups may be especially vulnerable:

- Children and adolescents involved in the foster care or juvenile justice systems
- Individuals who are experiencing or have experienced homelessness

- Survivors of violence, abuse, or neglect
- Undocumented immigrants
- Migrant workers
- American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders
- People with low incomes
- Individuals with a history of substance abuse
- People with disabilities
- LGBTQ individuals

## **WHERE DOES HUMAN TRAFFICKING OCCUR?**

Human trafficking can occur anywhere!

Common recruiting areas include but are not limited to:

- Social networking sites
- Malls
- Schools
- Hotels
- Private homes
- Massage parlors
- Bars
- Street prostitution
- Restaurants
- Truck stops

## **WHAT TO LOOK FOR**

Because educators spend so much time with their students, they have a unique opportunity to spot signs that a student may be a victim of human trafficking. School administrators, bus drivers, counselors, maintenance personnel, cafeteria workers, resource officers and all other individuals involved in the school community should know how to recognize the signs. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children & Families, some of the signs to look for include:

- Unexplained absences from school
- Falling grades
- Change in attire, friends, disposition
- Repeated incidents of running away
- Mention of living at a worksite or with multiple people in a cramped living space
- Inability to speak for oneself
- Struggle to focus or concentrate on schoolwork

- Signs of being withdrawn or depressed
- Extreme timidity
- Aggression or defensiveness
- Age-inappropriate romantic partner
- Suicidal ideation
- Evidence of dental issues, bruises, burns
- Weight loss or malnourishment
- Mention of multiple sex partners or sexually transmitted diseases
- Heightened stress response

## **WHAT TO DO**

The Texas Education Agency has partnered with the Children’s Advocacy Centers of Texas to develop a toolkit for educators addressing child abuse reporting responsibilities. To view the toolkit, please visit TEA’s website at [tea.texas.gov](http://tea.texas.gov) and search “Prevention and Awareness of Child Abuse, Neglect, including Trafficking of a Child Toolkit and Resources.”

The National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments advises educators who suspect a student is being recruited or exploited to initiate an investigation with the school resource officer or appropriate law enforcement authority. If you suspect child abuse or neglect, the center recommends that educators make a report with Child Protective Services within 48 hours of that suspicion and keep your case reference number for your records. If you believe the student to be in immediate danger, call 911. For more information on the national center’s suggested protocol, visit the center’s website at [safesupportivelearning.ed.gov](http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov).

Be aware of the possibility that the student won’t identify as a victim. The Texas Education Agency provides some reasons why victims may not self-identify:

- Limited family and social support
- Victims may be trained to be wary of authority
- Victims may have run away from a problematic home
- A strong bond that exists between trafficker and victim
- Feelings of shame, hopelessness, and resignation
- Threats of violence against the victim or their loved ones
- No personal identification or documents
- Being confined or monitored
- Feeling that no one will understand

More broadly, educators can work to prevent human trafficking by educating themselves and educating others. School boards, school districts, law enforcement and prosecuting agencies should coordinate to establish protocols to spot recruitment opportunities, identify victims, and prosecute their traffickers. Reluctance to believe human trafficking is a problem, the inability to identify someone who may be a victim, and limited resources to support at-risk youths or school resources officers all contribute to the likelihood that human trafficking will occur and victims will go unidentified.

According to the Texas Attorney General's office, at any given time there are 79,000 victims of youth sex trafficking and 234,000 victims of labor trafficking in Texas. Trafficking occurs in all cities and towns in the state. It is necessary that those with the ability to intervene on behalf of victims are knowledgeable, observant, and willing to act.



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or by calling 800-204-2222, ext. 1800

# REPORT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Call the National Human Trafficking Hotline  
toll free at

**888-3737-888**

or text **“Help”** or **“Info”**  
to **BeFree (233733)**.

The hotline is staffed 24/7 with people trained in recognizing and identifying trafficking. They can help you make sense of the information you have and recommend next steps.

## LEARN MORE ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

U.S. Department of State

Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons  
[state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/office-to-monitor-and-combat-trafficking-in-persons](https://state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/office-to-monitor-and-combat-trafficking-in-persons)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Office on Trafficking in Persons  
[acf.hhs.gov/otip](https://acf.hhs.gov/otip)

The Attorney General of Texas  
Human Trafficking Initiative  
[texasattorneygeneral.gov/human-trafficking](https://texasattorneygeneral.gov/human-trafficking)

The Polaris Project  
[polarisproject.org](https://polarisproject.org)

Catholic Charities  
[catholiccharitiesusa.org](https://catholiccharitiesusa.org)

Shared Hope International  
[sharedhope.org](https://sharedhope.org)

Mosaic Family Services  
[mosaicfamily.org](https://mosaicfamily.org)

Children at Risk  
[childrenatrisk.org](https://childrenatrisk.org)



[tyla.org](https://tyla.org)