

Companion Guide

Human Trafficking Investigation and Prosecution

Trafficking has been around a long time ... think slavery, prostitution, forced labor, domestic servitude ... think obtaining, harboring a person and selling them to someone else.

Four categories of human trafficking

1. Adult labor trafficking
2. Child labor trafficking
3. Adult sex trafficking
4. Child sex trafficking

Pimps/traffickers acquire victims through force, fraud and coercion. Children under the age of 18 can't consent to being exploited or prostituted. They are trafficking victims. There are no child prostitutes; they are being made to engage in the conduct that constitutes prostitution. All kids are vulnerable to trafficking, because children lack judgment.

Traffickers/pimps are smart, master manipulators, who exploit the vulnerabilities of potential victims, including factors such as:

- Homelessness
- Truancy
- Addiction
- Abuse

But children from normal homes can also become trafficking victims. Trafficking isn't a crime that discriminates.

The tactics of a trafficker/pimp evolve to meet the needs of each particular victim. They can assess people well, take advantage of desperation or a need for belonging/love; they can adapt him/herself to meet the needs of the victims. Perpetrators may beat, rape, abuse, threaten victims and/or shower them with love. They instill great fear in victims. Victims don't escape, because they fear the trafficker, have no IDs and no place to go.

Even people in 18-22-year-old range are still processing decisions ... psychological fear can alter decision-making and keep people desperately tied to the trafficker. Boys and girls are being trafficked and are also being groomed to be exploiters, at younger and younger ages.

Interdiction

If something doesn't look or seem right, ask questions, explore the situation. Traffickers have to use our highway systems ... that is their weak point and law enforcement's strength.

Know indicators of trafficking:

1. Condoms
2. Journals

3. Pre-paid cards
4. Business cards
5. One person in vehicle won't allow others to speak
6. Driver has passenger's ID
7. Tattoos
8. Recognize situation may not be what it appears to be.
9. Pay attention to all individuals in vehicle, apartment, home, hotel.
10. Identify all people in the situation and figure out their relationships.
11. Watch for verbal and non-verbal cues, stories that don't match up.
12. Separate victims from traffickers or young people from adults to question them.
13. Always be prepared, because traffickers are always prepared with plans, instructions to victims on what they are to say to police, consequences if they don't obey, lies about law enforcement and how they treat victims. They want victims more afraid of the system than they are of the trafficker.
14. If you think back-up would be helpful, call for it.
15. Document evidence well.
16. Take notes.
17. Pay attention to the details of what people are saying, how they look.
18. Take photos.
19. Look for ledgers – in phones as well as computers and binders. Secure these items and go through **all the evidence** on the phone or computer. Prepare your search warrants well. These types of cases often need more corroboration than other types of cases, including the history of the victim. Get all of this evidence on the front end of the investigation. It's much more difficult to get it on the back end.
20. Get the prosecutor's office involved early so they have investment in and ownership of the case.
21. When you think of trafficking, whether the investor, transporter, recruiter, marketer, purchaser – all can be charged and prosecuted with trafficking.

Victim-Centered Approach

Treat people as potential victims – with dignity, kindness, value and respect – even before you know whether this is a trafficking situation or not.

Don't use harmful words about victims; don't refer to them as prostitutes or whores. Children are raped. Pimps are traffickers.

Give victims extra time; they don't trust law enforcement.

Take plenty of time to correctly assess the situation and the people you think are victims.

Anywhere there is a demand for sex or exploitation, there is trafficking.

Make sure victim okay from the beginning. Make victim as comfortable, secure and feeling as safe as possible ... soften the approach. Treat person with courtesy and sensitivity; this is a traumatized person with baggage.

Use survivor leaders and victim advocates.

Rub rough edges off the system while you still bring the perpetrator to justice.

Partnerships

There are more professional drivers (truck and bus) on the road than there are law enforcement officers.

Using free Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) or Busing on the Lookout (BOTL) materials work with CDL schools, trucking companies, bus companies and the laws governing entry-level CDL requirements in your state in order to train industry.

Collaborate and use anti-human trafficking resources and victim services in your area so you have a comprehensive effort with all law enforcement and community members and services. Some of these include owners/employees at hotels, malls, casinos, convenience stores, hospitals, taxi and bus drivers, truck drivers.

Close loopholes to traffickers – across the nation, give same message, use same hotline number, make human trafficking cases an accountable priority

National Human Trafficking Hotline – 1-888-3737-888.