

Introduction to Human Trafficking: What It Is and How it Impacts the Disability Community

Presented By:

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The National Human Trafficking and Disabilities Working Group

The mission of the National Human Trafficking & Disabilities Working Group (NHTDWG) is to promote a survivor-centered, collaborative approach steeped in human rights and disability justice for the prevention of trafficking of people with disabilities and Deaf individuals and ensure an accessible and appropriate response to survivors.

Visit

www.iofa.org/nhtdwg

Or email:

nhtdwg@iofa.org

For more information



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Ericka Reil

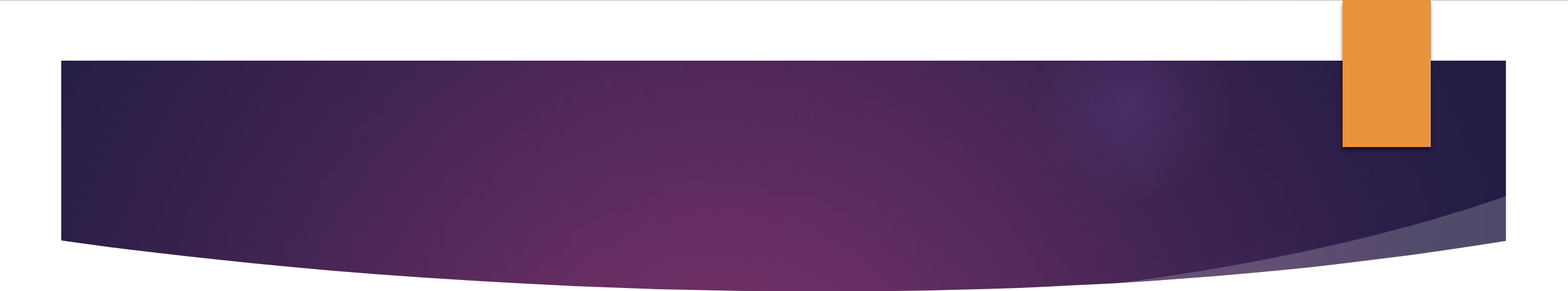
Ericka is not only someone who is living with a disability, but also works as disability advocate for the Vermont Center for Independent Living, a disability rights organization, where she has worked for 17 years. She is the Chair of several Boards dealing with protections and advocacy for people with disabilities. She travels around the state and country training on disability rights and culture. Currently she lives in Barre, Vermont with husband, Joe and her menagerie of animals.



Jody Haskin

Jody is the Anti-Trafficking Program Manager for the International Organization for Adolescents (IOFA). IOFA is a US-based, non-profit organization working globally since 1999 to address human trafficking and exploitation. IOFA is one of the Founders and Coordinators of the National Human Trafficking & Disabilities Working Group. Jody has worked for the last seven years on training and technical assistance for youth organizations and child welfare systems in education, screening, referral, and service provision tools to address sex and labor trafficking in youth.



- 
- ▶ Centering survivors and being mindful of this space within chat box and with questions
 - ▶ Being respectful of the space
 - ▶ Understand that this is being recorded - if you would like to ask a specific question or ask privately, please contact us
 - ▶ Practice self-care
 - ▶ If you need to leave, please do this is a hard topic

Overview

- ❖ What is Human Trafficking
- ❖ Indicators of Human Trafficking
- ❖ Case studies
- ❖ Resources
- ❖ Intersection of Disability and Trafficking
- ❖ Legal Barriers and the Law



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What comes to mind
when you hear the words
Human Trafficking?

Perceptions of Human Trafficking through the Media

When we hear of Human Trafficking we may think of:

- ❖ Young woman or girls
- ❖ From a different country
- ❖ Speaking little to no English
- ❖ Kidnapped (snatched from a parking lot)
- ❖ Sold into slavery (sex trade, massage parlors)
- ❖ Physically restrained or held against her will
- ❖ Trailers of people moved across the southern border

Why do providers serving people with disabilities need to learn about human trafficking?



Poll Question 1

What Do You Know About Human Trafficking?

True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

STATEMENT 1

Human trafficking doesn't directly impact individuals with disabilities



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What Do You Know About Human Trafficking?

True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

STATEMENT 1

Human trafficking doesn't directly impact individuals with disabilities

ANSWER:

FALSE – People with disabilities are trafficked in all parts of the United States – rural areas, reservations, suburbs and urban areas

What is Human Trafficking?

- ▶ Human Trafficking is the practice of exploiting people as commodities in conditions of sexual and/or labor servitude
- ▶ Human trafficking is also referred to as:
 - ▶ Commercial Sexual Exploitation
 - ▶ Debt bondage
 - ▶ Bonded-labor

Definition of Human Trafficking

Federal Law: Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000

(A) Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by **force, fraud, or coercion**, or in which the person induced to perform the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt form such act **has not attained 18 years of age**; or,

(B) The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion bondage, or slavery

Human Trafficking is:

ACTION

Recruit Harbor
Entice Transport
Provide
Obtain
Maintain
Advertise
Solicit
Patronize

(How did the
person get into
this situation)



MEANS

Force

Fraud

Coercion

(How was the
person kept in
the situation?)



PURPOSE

Involuntary
Servitude
Debt
Bondage
Peonage
Commercial Sex

(For what
purpose was the
person in/kept in
the situation?)

OR

Under 18 YOA

Recruit
Harbor
Entice
Transport
Provide
Obtain
Maintain
Advertise
Solicit
Patronize

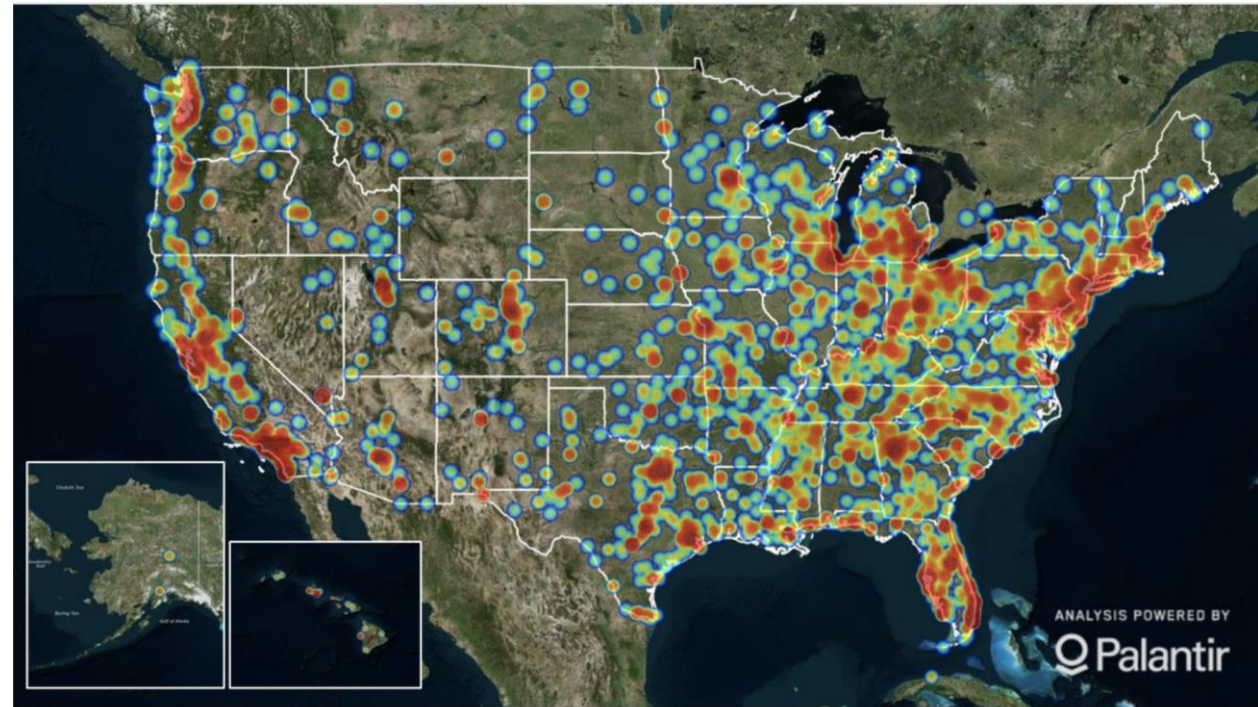
For the purpose of
commercial sex

Additional component of person with Disability in a Trafficking Situation

	Individual without disabilities	Individual with disabilities
Force	✓	✓
Fraud	✓	✓
Coercion	✓	✓
Withholding of Social Security Benefits		✓

Human Trafficking in the United States

According to data from the National Human Trafficking Hotline, there have been **63,380 human trafficking cases** reported across the United States since December 2007.



Locations of human trafficking situations in the United States in 2019.

National Human Trafficking Hotline Cases, Reported in 2019

11,500 cases and 22,326 individual victims reported

- Trafficking Type
 - Sex trafficking: 8,248
 - Labor trafficking: 1,236
 - Sex and labor trafficking: 505
 - Not specified: 1,511
- Gender
 - Female: 9,357
 - Male: 1,304
 - Gender Minorities: 99
 - Unknown: 740
- Age
 - Adults: 6,684
 - Minors: 2,582
 - Unknown: 2,234

Poll Question 2

What Do You Know About Human Trafficking? True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

In order to be considered trafficking, a person must be moved across a city, state, or country border.



What Do You Know About Youth Trafficking?

Part 2

True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

In order to be considered trafficking, a person must be moved across a city, state, or country border.

ANSWER:

FALSE – Human trafficking does not require any movement

Human Trafficking vs. Smuggling

Human Trafficking: Exploitation

- ▶ Crime or violation against a person
- ▶ Contains element of coercion
- ▶ Subsequent exploitation and/or forced labor
- ▶ Trafficked persons seen as victims by the law
- ▶ No movement required

Smuggling: Transportation

- ▶ Unauthorized border crossing
- ▶ No coercion
- ▶ Facilitated entry and harboring of a person from one country to another

Why Is It Happening?

- ❖ Similar to drugs & arms
- ❖ Limited interdiction compared to drugs & arms
- ❖ Low risk vs. High yield
- ❖ Can be hidden in plain sight
- ❖ Not always seen as a crime
- ❖ Difficult to prove

Who are Traffickers?

- ❑ Men and women of all ages, ethnicities, & races
- ❑ Caregivers
- ❑ Family members
- ❑ Intimate partners
- ❑ Employers
- ❑ Teachers & coaches
- ❑ Religious leaders
- ❑ Pimps
- ❑ Gangs
- ❑ Strangers

A trafficker can be
anyone

Who Do Traffickers Target?

- ❑ Runaway and homeless youth
- ❑ People with disabilities
- ❑ Survivors of abuse/domestic violence
- ❑ LGBTQIA+ individuals
- ❑ Impoverished/indebted people

- ❑ Desperate for education, jobs, or better opportunities
- ❑ Undocumented Foreign Nationals
- ❑ Displaced persons from civil unrest, natural disasters, political instability

NOTE: Anyone can be trafficked

Where Traffickers Recruit

- Local Convenience Store
- School
- Parents
- Playground
- Bus Stop
- Work
- Social Media
- Peers
- Malls
- Home

The Grooming Process



- ❑ Target person
- ❑ Gain trust & information
- ❑ Fill a need
- ❑ Isolate victim
- ❑ Abuse begins
- ❑ Maintain control

How do traffickers **control** victims?

- ❑ Mental, physical, sexual, & emotional abuse
- ❑ Financial dependence
- ❑ Blackmail
- ❑ Forced drug & alcohol use
- ❑ Fear of law enforcement
- ❑ Fear of safety for self & family
- ❑ Fear of deportation
- ❑ Negative experience in “the system”
- ❑ Victims not realizing they are victims
- ❑ Trauma coerced attachment/bonding (Raghavan & Doychek, 2015)
- ❑ Isolation

People Are Trafficked in Several Industries

❖ Labor Trafficking

- Domestic service
- Factories
- Peddling
- Agriculture
- Criminal syndicates
- Restaurant work
- Construction
- Hotel/motel housekeeping
- Other informal labor sectors
- Nail Salons
- Criminal Drug Industry

People Are Trafficked in Several Industries

❖ Sex Trafficking

- Hotels
- Online websites
- Strip clubs
- Street
- Homes
- Truck stops
- Massage Parlors
- Familial trafficking

The National Human Trafficking Hotline Statistics

Top 5 Reported Methods of Force, Fraud, Coercion

Sex Trafficking

1. Induce/Exploit Substance Abuse
2. Physical Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Intimidation
5. Emotional (Intimacy) Abuse

Labor Trafficking

1. Withhold Pay
2. Excessive Working Hours
3. Threat to Report to Immigration
4. Verbal Abuse
5. Withhold/Deny Needs

Why Don't People Leave?

- ❖ Frequent if not constant accompaniment
- ❖ Use of and/or threat of violence
- ❖ Language and social barriers
- ❖ Fear of retaliation, death, arrest, harm to themselves or to loved ones
- ❖ Lack of alternative options
- ❖ Addiction
- ❖ Survivors may not be looking to be rescued


Why Don't People Leave?

(continued)

- ❖ Traumatic bonding to the trafficker
- ❖ Normalization of the exploitation
- ❖ Traffickers train them to tell lies and false stories
- ❖ Survivors trained to distrust authority
- ❖ Traffickers maintain physical and psychological hold over the victim
- ❖ Survivors labeled as criminals instead of victims
- ❖ Shame and self-blame



The Intersection of Disability and Human Trafficking



“[P]eople with disabilities
[are]...especially vulnerable to human
trafficking.”

-U.S. Department of State,
Trafficking in Persons Report (2016)

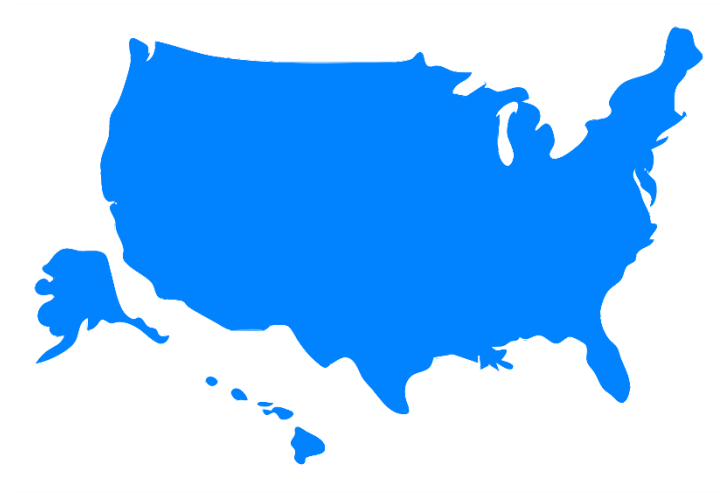
Disability is Diverse

- ❖ Physical/Mobility
- ❖ Sensory
- ❖ Developmental
- ❖ Intellectual
- ❖ Neurodivergent
- ❖ Chronic health conditions
- ❖ Emotional
- ❖ Mental health



CDC Reports: 2018

22.5% (61 million Americans) or
1 in 4 adults in the USA
live with a disability

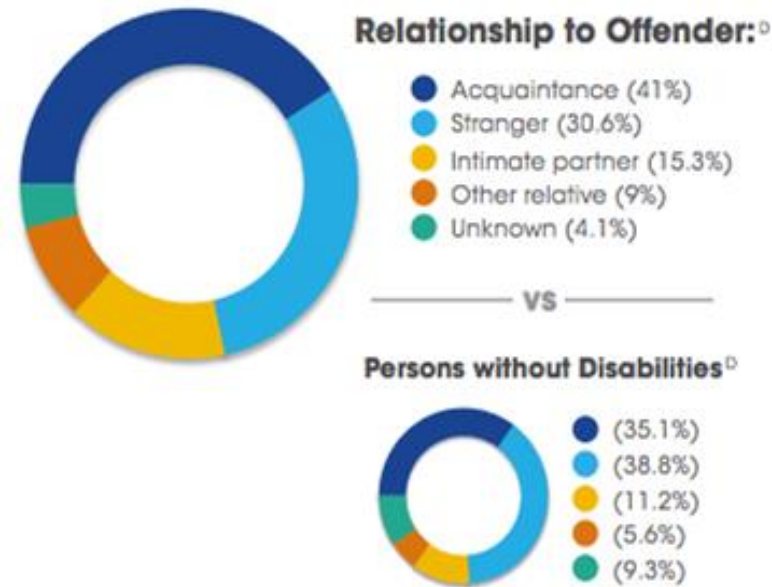


Numbers do not include Individuals who are institutionalized

Often reliant on
others for
assistance



Increased
vulnerability
to abuse



Source: Office of Victims of Crime



Poll Question

What Do You Know About Human Trafficking?

True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

STATEMENT

A trafficker may seek out a person with a disability to gain access to their benefits.

What Do You Know About Human Trafficking?

True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

STATEMENT

A trafficker may seek out a person with a disability to gain access to their benefits.

ANSWER:

True, a trafficker may also become a payee for the person as well as their trafficker

Some Reasons People with Disabilities Are Targeted for Trafficking

- ❖ Money
- ❖ People with Disabilities are seen as burdens
- ❖ Lack of resources
- ❖ Lack of options for both families and persons with disabilities
- ❖ People with disabilities are sometimes groomed at early ages
- ❖ People tend to look the other way when it comes to abuse of people with disabilities

Recruitment Sites

- Group homes
- Mental health facilities
- Social security & benefits offices
- Online
- Substance abuse disorder programs
- Homeless shelters
- Youth programs

Ways Traffickers Control People with Disabilities

- ❑ Lead victim to think no one will believe them
- ❑ Convince them they are fine and do not need care or support
- ❑ Offer to provide better care or support
- ❑ Pose as group homes
- ❑ Isolate them from friends & family

Grooming and Control of Youth with Disabilities

Grooming involves:

- ▶ Identifying youth
- ▶ Building rapport
- ▶ Gaining information
- ▶ Filling a need

Control involves:

- ▶ Social Isolation
- ▶ Physical Isolation
- ▶ Physical Harm
- ▶ Coercion
- ▶ Threats



Poll Question

What Do You Know About Human Trafficking?

True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

STATEMENT

People with Disabilities often don't know their trafficker

What Do You Know About Human Trafficking? True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

STATEMENT

People with Disabilities often don't know their trafficker

ANSWER:

FALSE – in many cases, the trafficker is a caregiver, friend or family member



“I wanted a person to care about
me and to be LOVED”

Survivor

National Data on the Abuse of Victims with Disabilities

- ❖ Individuals with multiple disabilities are more often victims of crime than those with only one disability or no disability at all.
- ❖ Individual with disabilities are two and a half times as likely to be victims of crime than those who are non-disabled.
- ❖ 40% of victims who have disabilities know their offender

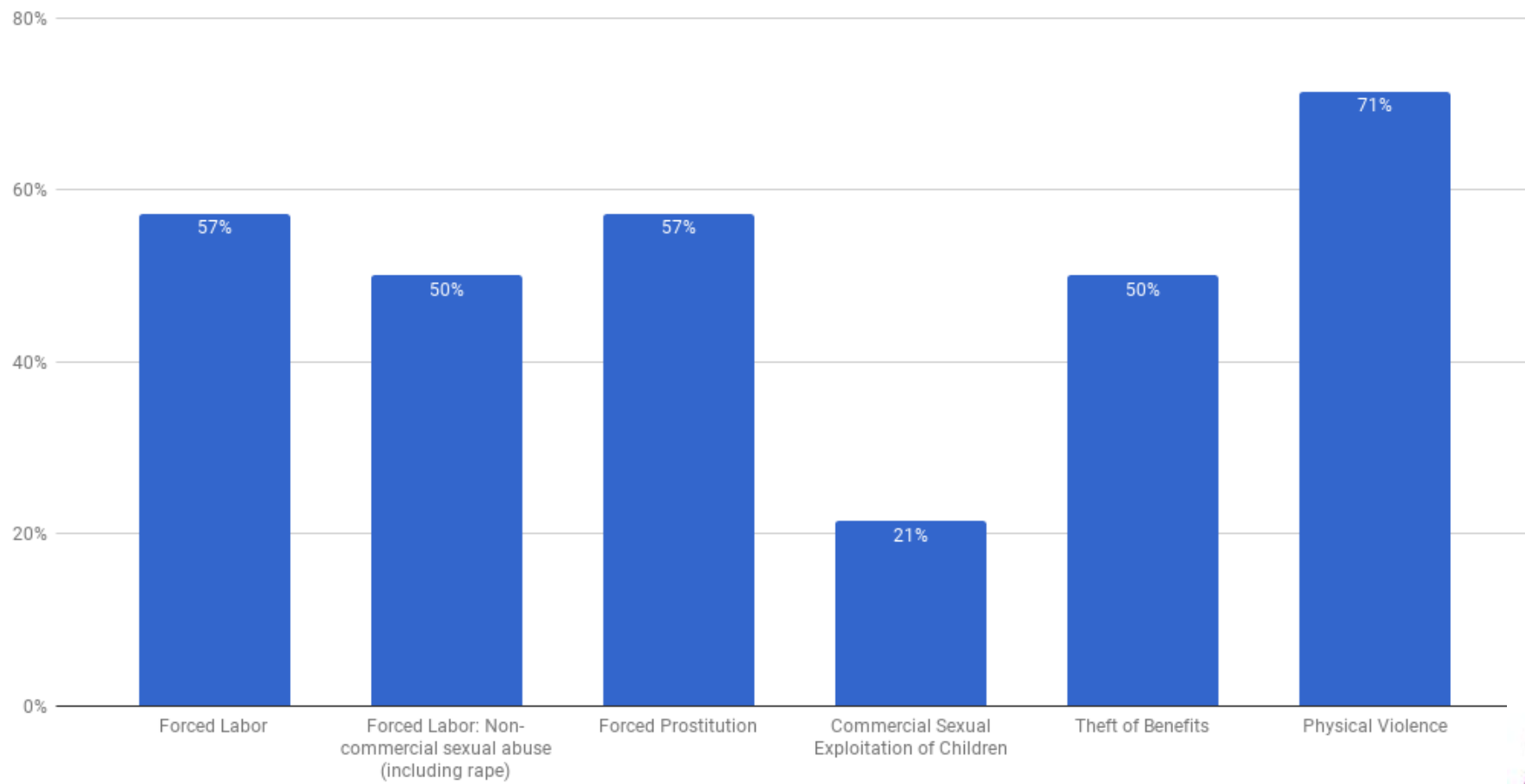


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National Data on the Abuse of Victims with Disabilities

- ❖ The 12.7 % of crimes against people with disabilities are serious violent crimes (rape or sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault)
- ❖ 21% of individuals with disabilities who are victimized do not report the crime because they believe that the authorities will not believe them
- ❖ Individuals with cognitive disabilities are more likely to be victims of crime but report these crimes less than other individuals with disabilities.

Types of Abuses in Federal Civil and Criminal Cases Involving the Trafficking of Victims with Disabilities (2000-2017)*





Poll Question 4

What Do You Know About Human Trafficking? True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

STATEMENT 4

People with disabilities are less likely to report about trafficking

What Do You Know About Human Trafficking? True or False?

Please reply to the following statement as True or False:

STATEMENT 4

People with disabilities are less likely to report about trafficking

ANSWER:

TRUE – People with disabilities may not know how to report, understand the reporting process, or are groomed to mistrust law enforcement.

Why People with Disabilities are Not Reporting

- ❖ Process of reporting is not understood
- ❖ Fear of being accused of being called a “frequent flyer”
- ❖ Fear of police
- ❖ Overstimulation of the process
- ❖ Can not remember the order of events
- ❖ Communication barriers
- ❖ Fear of losing independence



Indicators of Human Trafficking

Indicators of Human Trafficking


- ❑ Unnecessary or unusual security/accompaniment
- ❑ Lack of freedom: person not allowed to come and go as they please
- ❑ Signs of assault, restraint, or malnourishment
- ❑ Paid little/works long hours without breaks
- ❑ Isolation from prior social groups, depression, drug use

Indicators of Human Trafficking – continued

- ❑ Broken medical equipment
- ❑ Service animals uncared for
- ❑ Same representative-payee for multiple, unrelated adults
- ❑ Frequent emergency room admissions
- ❑ Physical injuries left untreated
- ❑ Excessive prescriptions for scheduled drugs

Questions You Can Ask:

- ❖ Can you leave your job if you want to?
- ❖ Can you come and go if you please?
- ❖ Are you hurting?
- ❖ Do you have access to your medication?
- ❖ Where do you sleep?
- ❖ Where do you eat?
- ❖ Do you know where your ID is?
- ❖ Why is your mobility aide broken?



“You see, trafficking is not a short-term affliction-it affects a survivor’s whole life, families and even entire communities.”

- Margeaux Grey, Trafficking Survivor



Law Enforcement Involvement

Likely Intersections with Law Enforcement

- ❖ Hotel/Motel complaints
- ❖ Emergency rooms / medical professionals
- ❖ Motor vehicle complaints
- ❖ Inside people's homes
- ❖ Domestic abuse and sexual assault cases
- ❖ Runaways/missing children
- ❖ Referrals from the public
- ❖ Drug cases
- ❖ Overdose and other 911 calls

Barriers to Investigations

- ❖ No case is the same
- ❖ Requires a significant amount of flexibility and patience
- ❖ May require months or years to investigate
- ❖ Rapport building can be challenging
- ❖ Relapse/recovery trajectory unpredictable
- ❖ Victim's trauma history may impact their ability to recall events and timelines
- ❖ Persons disability may impact recall and timelines
- ❖ Survivor impact WILL not be what you expect





Case Studies at the Intersection of Disability and Human Trafficking

Case Example



¹O'Neill, T. (2019, June 21). *Leader of Danbury-based sex trafficking ring gets 4.5-year prison sentence.*

Danbury, CT, 4 Men with mental health diagnosis trafficked for sex

- The men were groomed with promises of drugs, and their trafficker became their payee
- Their trafficker kept a running tab of their expenses including drugs and kept half of their “escort” money as a finders fee

Case Example: Interfamilial Trafficking

Case Example:

- ❑ Interfamilial Trafficking
- ❑ Commercial Sexual Exploitation of a Child
- ❑ Trafficked in exchange for drugs



Case Example: Labor Trafficking

⌚ Archive for Tuesday, January 24, 2006

Caregiver sentenced to 30 years in federal prison

- Kaufmans convicted of forced labor, involuntary servitude, and health care fraud.
- Sentenced to **30** and **15** years in federal prison, respectively.
- **Restitution: \$534,810.53**



AP File Photo





"Not since the days of slavery have we had an example of the antithesis of normalization as Henry's has provided."*

U.S. Dep't of Labor finds that Henry's Turkey Service failed to pay men overtime. Henry's Turkey Service pays the fines and promises compliance.

Former employee files complaint with the Iowa Dep't of Inspections and Appeals.

Henry's Turkey Service is not classified as a residential health-care facility, there is no further action.

1974

1979

1997

Late
1990s

2005

2009

Des Moines Register describes the Henry's Turkey Service operation. The factory remains opens.

In response to media inquires and concerned citizens reports, the Iowa Dep't of Human Services claims it has "no jurisdiction" and is "underfunded and understaffed."

Sherri Brown discovers that her brother had only \$88 in savings after 35 years of work. She contacts several state agencies. No action.

She contacts a reporter at The Des Moines Register.



What Can You Do?

Your Role in the Fight Against Human Trafficking

- ❖ Choose to acknowledge HT is happening and that PWD's are targeted .
- ❖ Learn about HT via webinars, trainings, etc.
- ❖ Connect to anti-trafficking orgs and networks in your area.
- ❖ Offer to train on disability and other resources to HT providers.
- ❖ Look into including HT screening tools into org intake.
- ❖ Include HT awareness info in newsletters and other list serves.
- ❖ Join local coalitions and taskforces

Organizations to Partner With

- ❖ National Human Trafficking And Disabilities Working Group
- ❖ Domestic Violence services
- ❖ Police department
- ❖ LGBTQIA+ Organizations
- ❖ Pride Centers
- ❖ Sexual assault organization
- ❖ Crime Victims Services
- ❖ Human Trafficking Task Force in your State



Resources

National Human Trafficking Resource Center

- ❑ **Call** 1-888-373-7888
- ❑ **Text** “Help” to BeFree (233733)
- ❑ **Report** online <http://traffickingresourcecenter.org/>

HEAL Network

- ❑ **Email** healtraffickingnow@gmail.com
- ❑ **Visit** <https://healtrafficking.org>

Freedom Network USA

- ❑ **Call** 202-504-9602
- ❑ **Email** info@freedomnetworkusa.org
- ❑ **Visit** www.freedomnetworkusa.org

National Human Trafficking and Disabilities Working Group

- ❑ **Email** nhtdwg@iofa.org
- ❑ **Visit** <http://iofa.org/national-trafficking-disabilities-working-group/>

Centers for Independent Living

- ❑ **Visit** <https://www.calsilc.ca.gov/independent-locator>

National Disability Rights Network

- ❑ <https://www.ndrn.org/about/ndrn-member-agencies/>

Disability Provider Role: Follow Protocol

In the end, if you suspect any labor or sex Trafficking of kind of abuse happening report it.

- ▶ **Safety** is first priority
- ▶ Explain **mandated reporting**
- ▶ Interpreters and supports ready **before** you need them
- ▶ Provide **choice** and autonomy
- ▶ Trauma-informed language and **take your time**

**Contact the
National Human
Trafficking Hotline
for further
guidance.**

Assistance for Trafficking Victims: National Human Trafficking Hotline

Call: 1-888-373-7888

Text: “Help” to: Be Free

Report online at: <http://traffickingresourcecenter.org/>

This hotline will help:

- ▶ Assess whether you may have encountered a victim of human trafficking
- ▶ Identify local community resources to help victims coordinate with local social service organizations to help protect and serve victims so they begin process of restoring their lives

Questions?

Ericka Reil

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Vermont Center for

Independent Living

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Thank you!



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Email: NHTDWG@iofa.org
www.iofa.org/national-trafficking-disabilities-working-group/

NATIONAL
DISABILITY RIGHTS
NETWORK

Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Disabilities



UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS CHICAGO

Institute on Disability
and Human Development