



# WATCH

Wayne, Holmes & Ashland Anti-Trafficking Coalition

# Human Sex Trafficking: What Every Citizen Should Know

Gayle Byrne, MBA, CA



# Objectives



**WATCH**

Wayne, Holmes & Ashland Anti-Trafficking Coalition

- **Understand the scope and dynamics of human trafficking**
- **Identify the risk factors for victim vulnerability to human trafficking**
- **Discuss local supportive resources**

# Considerations

- **Common language**
- **Examples don't represent all possibilities**
- **Common ground**
- **Term Child applies to anyone under 18**
- **Sensitive Material**

# Current Culture

- **Music/movies**
- **Apps**
- **Behavior**
- **Ads**

# What is human trafficking?

- **Exploitation of human beings through force, fraud, or coercion, for the purposes of commercial sex or forced labor wherein a third party makes a profit.**
- **A victim DOES NOT have to be moved from place to place to be considered a trafficked person.**

## Smuggling vs. Trafficking

### Smuggling

- Movement
- Crime against a country
- Immigration Law
- Federal or International Law
- Voluntary

### Trafficking

- Does not require movement
- Crime against an individual
- Criminal Law
- State, Federal, or International Law
- Involuntary



**Human trafficking involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act.**

**Force**



**Coercion**



**Fraud**



# MYTH VS FACT

**Most traffickers use psychological means such as, tricking, defrauding, manipulating or threatening victims into providing commercial sex or exploitative labor.**

**-Polaris Project, 2018**



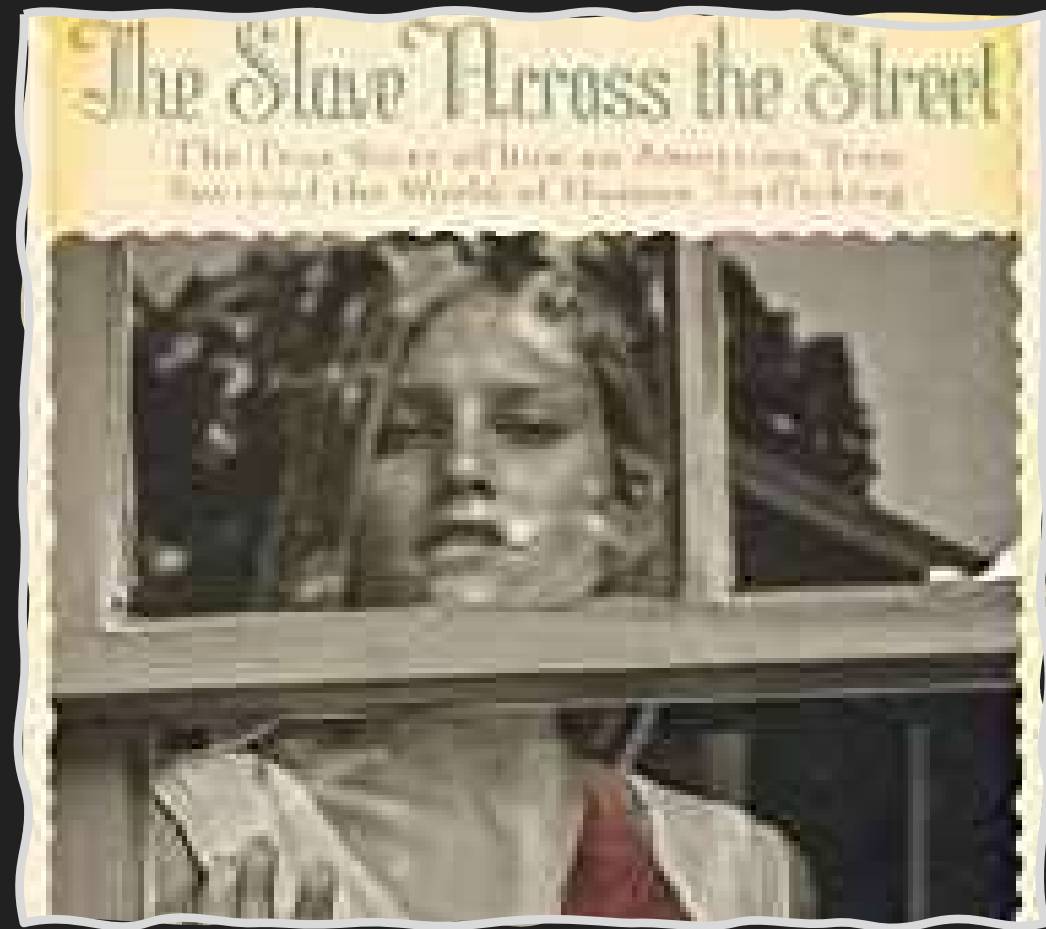
# How Traffickers Operate

**Most commonly, traffickers are known by their victims and use a grooming process to build trust and isolate them from already formed relationships.**

**22 USC 7102**

# One Face of a Victim

Theresa Flores



# Top 5 Forms of Force, Fraud, and Coercion

## SEX TRAFFICKING

Induces/Exploits Substance Abuse Issues **1,898**

Physical Abuse **1,780**

Sexual Abuse **1,184**

Intimidation - Displays/Threatens Weapons **1,102**

Emotional Abuse - Intimacy Related **1,019**



# Sex Trafficking

Commercial sex act induced by force, fraud or coercion, or in which person performing the act is under age 18.

Survival Sex  
Family-controlled  
Internet  
Pimp-controlled



Chris O'Sullivan / MGN

## SEX TRAFFICKING

Substance Use Concern **510**

Runaway Homeless Youth **473**

Recent Migration/Relocation **416**

Unstable Housing **366**

Mental Health Concern **334**



# Top 5 Risk Factors

# MYTH VS FACT



**Although a common misconception that only women and girls can be victims of sex trafficking, 36% of identified victims are boys**

**- US Institute Against Human Trafficking ([usiaht.org](http://usiaht.org))**

*"You can sell a human 10, 20, 30 times a day. You can't sell drugs or a firearm that many times."*

—Dr. Holly Atkinson

- Human trafficking is a \$150 billion global industry, after drugs (\$360 billion) and guns (\$375 billion) (Trafficking in Persons Report, 2021).
- Victims originate from almost every region of the world; the top three countries of origin of federally identified victims in FY 2017 were the **United States, Mexico, and Honduras.**

**Does it happen here?**



*Ohio is the 5<sup>th</sup> leading state for rate of reported cases of human trafficking and 5<sup>th</sup> for total number of cases (2021)*



1. Mississippi
2. Nevada
3. Missouri
4. District of Columbia
5. **Ohio**  
3.84/100,000

1. California
2. Florida
3. New York
4. Michigan
5. **Ohio**



- Demand
- Drugs (especially heroin, methamphetamine, fentanyl)
- 5 interstate highways
- Most truck stops in the nation
- Within 1 day drive to major cities
- Rural w/transient population
- Large immigrant populations
  - Language barriers
  - Undocumented w/lack of trust

# Why Ohio?

*Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force and the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center*

- Often looks like other crimes such as sexual assault, domestic violence, theft, drug trafficking
- Average age of entry into sex trafficking is 12-14
- Studies suggest that up to 90% of runaway youth become involved in the commercial sex industry

**Within 36 hours on the streets, 1 in 3 runaway teens will be recruited into some form of trafficking**

**NHTRC**  
1-888-373-7888

NATIONAL  
HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
RESOURCE CENTER

Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
U.S. Department of Justice; Free the Slaves



# Who are the victims?

**ANYONE** can be susceptible to trafficking regardless of race, class, education, gender, age, or citizenship when forcefully coerced or enticed by false promises.

*“When people are struggling with their finances, struggling with poverty, loss of work, childhood trauma and abuse, homeless or a young person who’s not safe at home and ends up on the streets or couch surfing, all those things can lead to you being exploited by a trafficker—and those people are in every town.”*

Rebecca Ayling, Project Director

*New Hampshire Human Trafficking Collaborative Task Force*

# Vulnerability Factors

- High unemployment
- Poverty
- Crime
- Discrimination
- Cultural Acceptance of Practice
- Prior History of Sexual Assault/Abuse (94%)
- Runaways/Homelessness (1 in 5)
- Child Welfare Involvement (93.5%)
- Foster Care Placement (60%)
- Substance Use (79%)
- Communities of Vulnerability (LGBTQ, Undocumented, Etc.)



US Trafficking in Persons Report, 2021

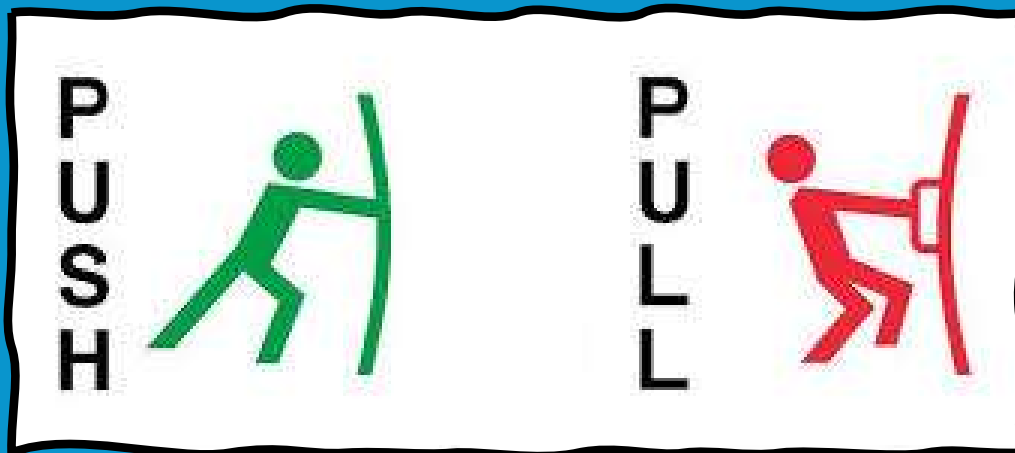
# Push/Pull Factors

## Push:

- Physical/Sexual abuse
- Poverty
- Homelessness
- Food insecurity
- Addiction

## Pull:

- Love
- Security
- Money/Wealth
- Job opportunities
- Freedom
- Distorted information about destination



# Physical indicators

- **Inadequate/inappropriate clothing for current weather conditions**
- **Malnutrition**
- **Dehydration**
- **Poor dental hygiene**
- **Appearance inconsistent with biological age**
- **TBI, headaches, migraines**
- **Lack of ID or other important documentation**
- **Physical trauma in various stages of healing**
- **Delay in seeking medical care**
- **Untreated chronic health conditions**
- **Fractures**
- **Stab or gunshot injury**
- **Burns, cuts, wounds**
- **Untreated skin infections/inflammation**
- **Stress/exhaustion**

# Behavioral Indicators

- Lack of eye contact
- Unable to give address
- Unfamiliar with location or surroundings
- Vague, scripted or inconsistent history
- Loss of sense of time
- Seems fearful/anxious
- Hyper-alert
- Does not possess their own documents
- Overdose survivor/appears to be under the influence/ going through withdrawal
- Med seeking
- Texts continuously
- Uses language common in the sex industry
- Stopped going to school, work, connecting with family
- Something feels “off”

# Other Indicators

- **Dating much older, abusive or controlling person/peers**
- **Has large amounts of cash, jewelry, expensive clothes**
- **Multiple hotel room keys**
- **False ID, no ID, or seems to lie about age**
- **Refers to boyfriend as “Daddy”**
- **Mentions keeping late night or unusual hours**
- **Another person always speaks for them**
- **Inconsistent stories related to injuries**
- **Unable to clarify where they live or is unsure of current location**
- **Signs of physical abuse - including branding/tattooing, broken bones, black eyes**

# Recruitment

## *Finesse*

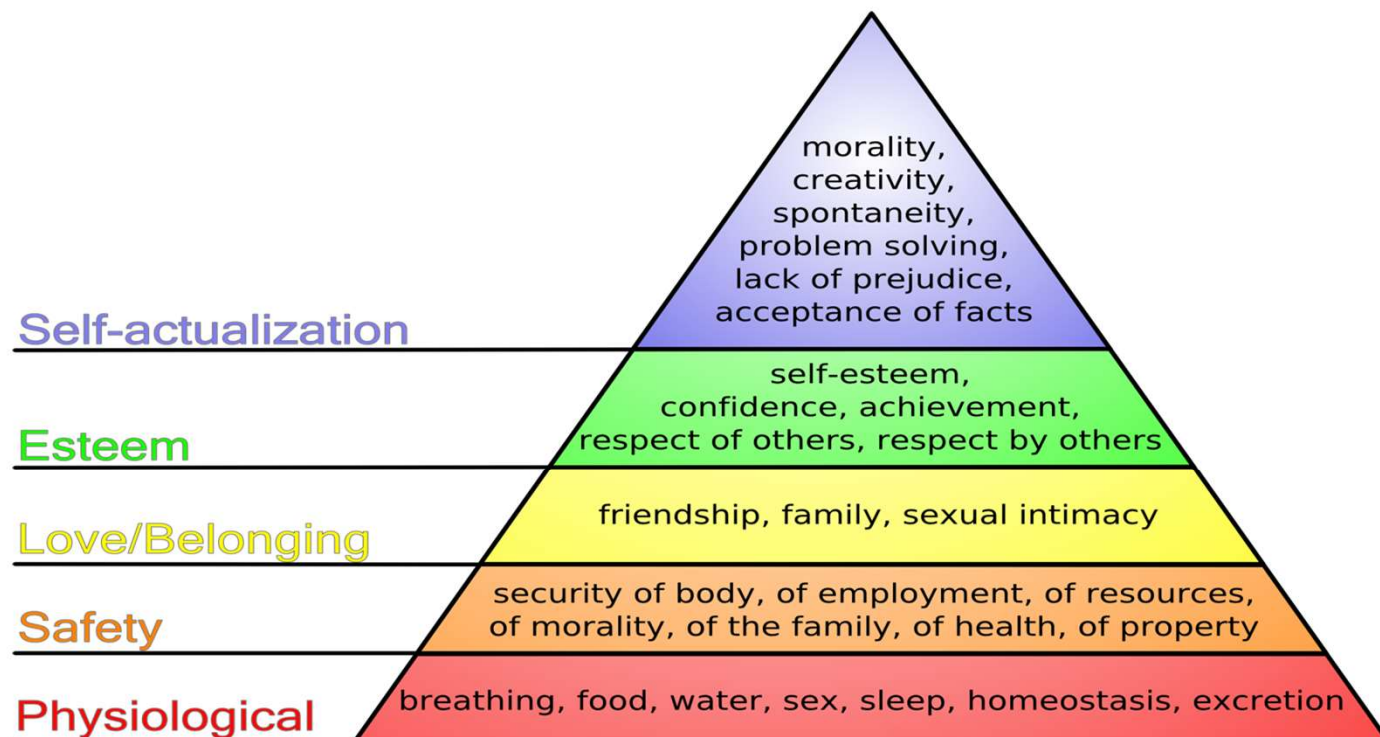
- Poses as boyfriend/friend/mentor
- Very selective
- Complimentary
- Provides feelings of love, acceptance, safety

## *Guerrilla*

- Violent
- Uses abuse/intimidation to recruit and keep women in line
- “Breaks” a person’s will

# When people are vulnerable, the trafficker will find a way to use their needs to control them.

“psychological chains” – cause victim to become compliant and loyal  
“survival” on Maslow’s hierarchy – victim will do what is necessary to survive...



# Who Are The Traffickers?



- **Gangs**
- **Neighbors, friends, teachers, coaches**
- **Mentors**
- **Business owners**
- **Families (41%)**



# More About Families

- **Not uncommon for familial trafficking cases to involve intergenerational trafficking**
- **Familial victims are presenting as younger than third-party victims**
- **Familial trafficking may occur first by a family member and later by a third party**
- **More common in families living in poverty and/or experiencing severe opioid use disorder**
- **Often undocumented youth working 3<sup>rd</sup> shift**
- **Prevalence is higher in more rural parts of the state**

# Profile of a Trafficker

- **65% mother, 32% father**
- **81% drugs as currency**
- **29% drugs used as control tactic**
- **45% rural**
- **Abuse severity higher in rural cases**



# Profile of a Trafficker



- **24% were in foster care**
- **48% ran away (physical abuse/sexual assault)**
- **80% were sexually abused as children by family, foster parent, close family friend**
- **100% physical violence in the home or foster care**

Depaul College of Law, 2010 "25 Ex-pimps in Chicago"

# Ohio Case Examples

Hamilton county – April Corcoran gave sex with dtr for drugs and got 51 years

- [Drug addict mother April Corcoran traded daughter for drugs | news.com.au — Australia's leading news site](#)

Youngstown man arrested in Human trafficking sex sting operation

- [Police arrest pastor of Niles church in human trafficking sting - WFMJ.com](#)

Niles woman gets 10 years for trafficking a minor for sex

- [Niles woman gets ten years for trafficking child - WFMJ.com](#)

Jeremy Mack from Elyria got life in prison for trafficking four woman (including 16-year old) for sex

- [Elyria Man Sentenced To Life In Prison For Human Trafficking | USAO-NDOH | Department of Justice](#)

Toledo Man – sex trafficking

- [Toledo Man Sentenced to 15 Years in Prison for Human Trafficking — FBI](#)

# Trafficking is a Healthcare Issue

*87.8% of human trafficking survivors reported having contact with a healthcare provider while they were being trafficked*

- **63.3% Emergency Department**
- **29.6% Planned Parenthood**
- **22.5% Regular Doctor**
- **21.4% Urgent Care Clinic**
- **19.4% Women's Health Clinic**
- **19.4% Neighborhood Clinic**

- Laura J. Lederer and Christopher A. Wetzel,  
Health Consequences of Sex Trafficking”



# Why Healthcare Matters

- **A healthcare facility may be one of the only places that a trafficked person is likely to visit outside of their trafficking environment**
- **A medical encounter may be the victim's chance at safety**
- **Recognized nonverbal cues could save a victim**

# Noticing a Victim



- **Check your biases**
- **Consider your body language and the patient's**
- **Trust your gut (Someone else speaking for patient/Confusion about what happened/Brief answers/Tension in the room/Eye contact/Frequent checking phone/Patient supporter won't leave)**

**Don't discount the possibility that  
the trafficker is IN THE ROOM**

# Starting A Conversation

- **How did you get here?**
- **How will you get home?**
- **Where do you live?**
- **Do you like living there?**
- **Who do you live with?**
- **Do you feel safe?**
- **Do you have access to food?**
- **Do you have thoughts of harming yourself?**
- **Do you have any concerns about safety?**



# Continuing the Conversation

**“I am concerned that some of your symptoms may have been caused by someone hurting you....”**

**“I don’t know if abuse is a concern for you, but many of the patients I see are dealing with abusive relationships, some aren’t comfortable bringing it up so I routinely ask.....”**

# Focus on Safety

## ➤ Safety

- Immediate and short term issues
- Realistic possibilities
- Safety for HT often involves family or friends
- Increase options and access

## ➤ Technological short-termations

- GPS/Air Tags
- Phones
- Spyware

## ➤ Plan ways that patient can easily access necessary information

- Phone numbers
- Medical records
- Medical support services
- Medications

Note: Written plans or brochures may not be a safe option for patient

# Multi-Disciplinary Teams

- **Interface with all disciplines**
  - **Medical**
    - **Social worker (ED)**
  - **Victim Advocate**
  - **Law enforcement**



# Resources: Tip Lines/Task Force



- **Northeast Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force :**  
**216.443.6085**
- **Summit Regional Human Trafficking Task Force:**  
**330.252.2614**
- **Ohio Human Trafficking Line:**  
**844.363.6448**
- **National Trafficking Hotline:**  
**888.373.7888 or Text: BE FREE**  
**to 233733**

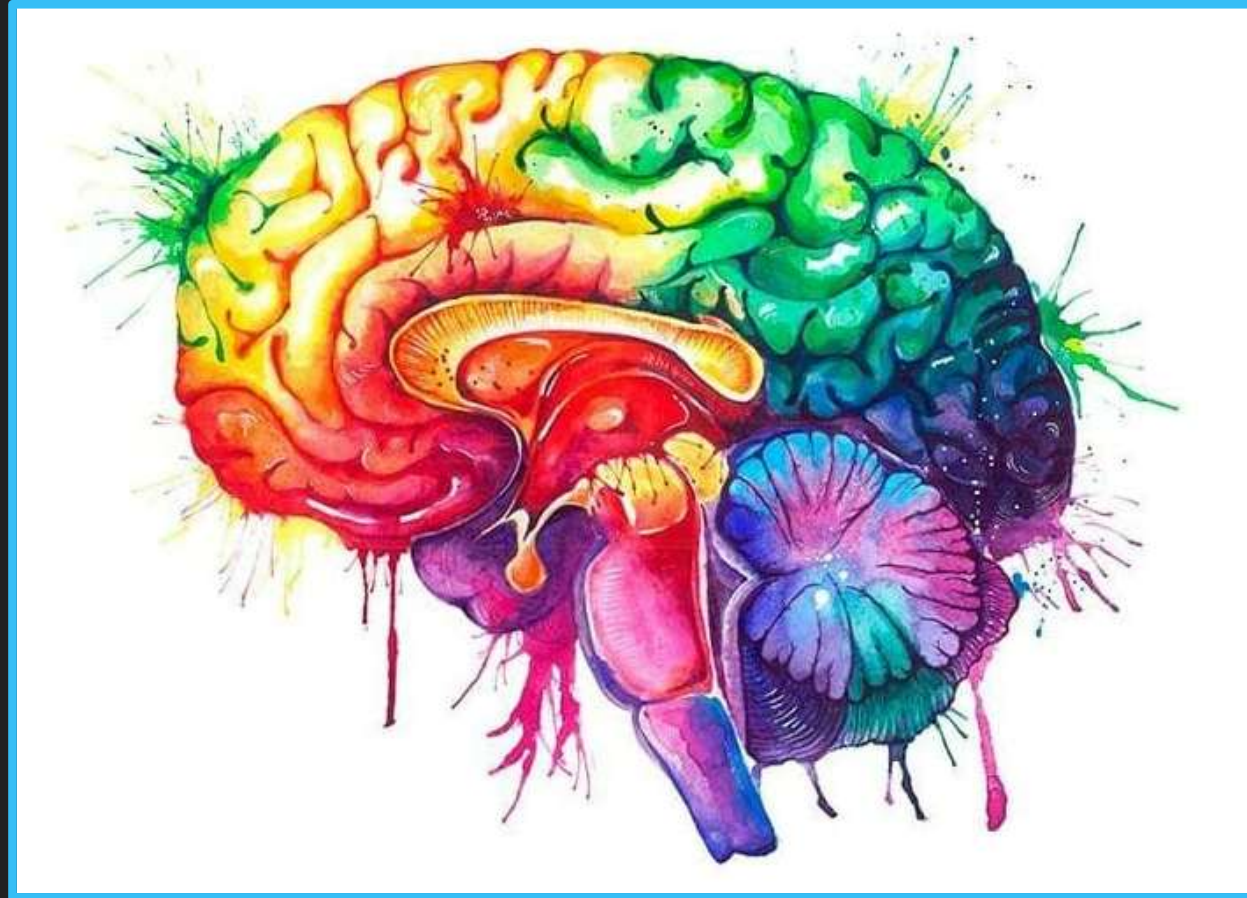


# Why Help?

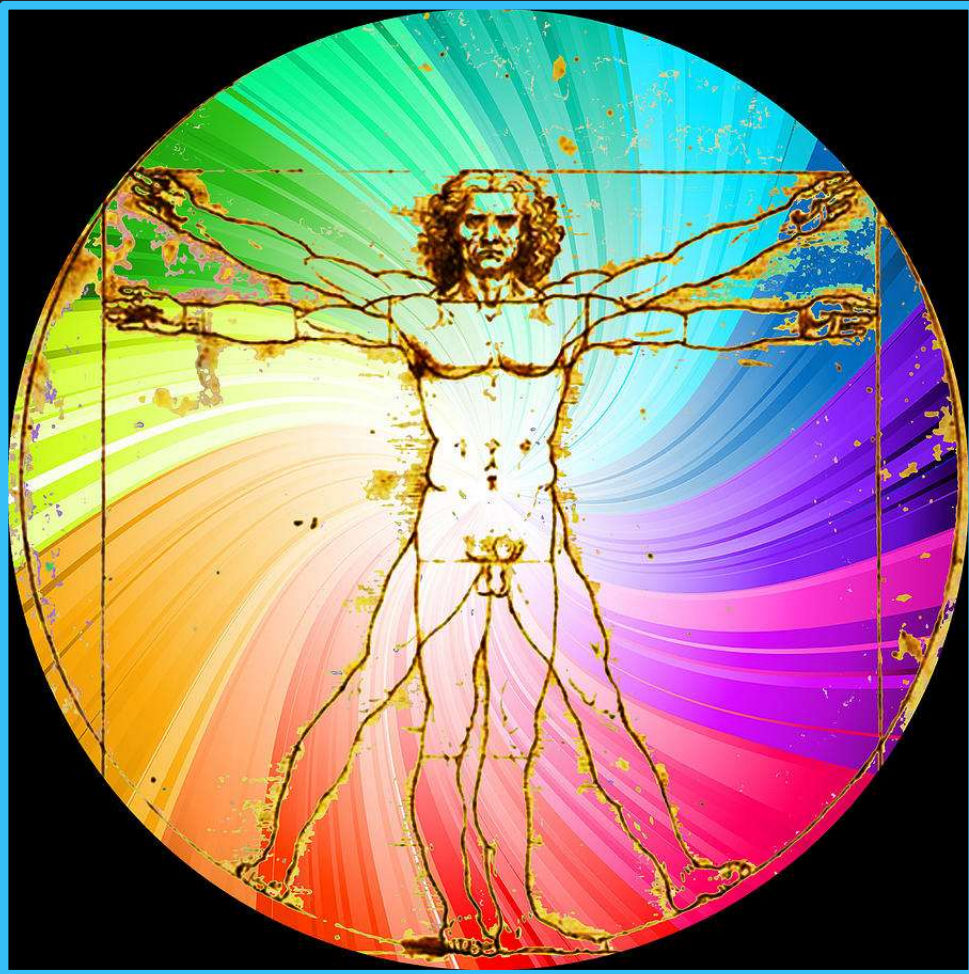
Estimates show that the average life span of a victim actively involved in trafficking is 3-7 years. Death often is a result of assault, abuse, HIV, malnutrition, overdose or suicide.

# Mental Impacts

- Depression
- Anxiety disorders
- Grief and shame
- Self-destructive behaviors (suicide, eating disorders, self harm)
- Traumatic bonding with perpetrator
- Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Memory loss



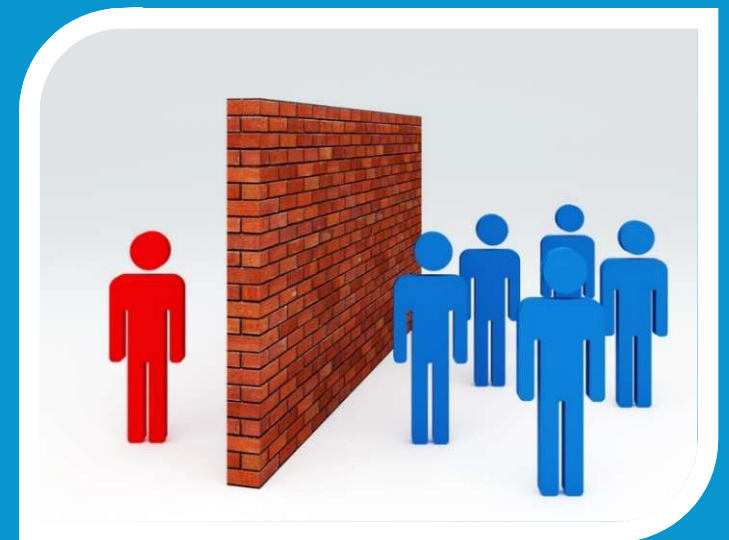
# Physical Impacts



- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Broken bones, concussions, burns, vaginal/anal tearing
- Malnutrition
- Alcohol and other drug use
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy/abortion
- Stunted growth (in children)
- Bed bug bites
- Chronic back, visual or respiratory problems

# Barriers to Seeking Services

- Limited availability of and access to services
- Fear of retaliation by the trafficker
- Repercussions of disclosure
- Cultural disinclination
- Shame or guilt
- Readiness for treatment/escape
- Lack of transportation
- Affordability
- Does not view self as victim
- Isolation



The OneEighty Domestic  
Violence and Sexual  
Assault Hotline is available  
24 /7:

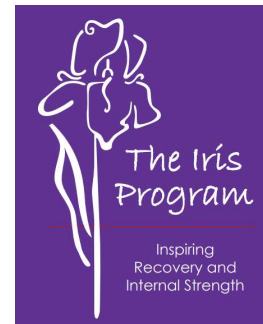
**800.686.1122**

For minor victims, contact the  
Children's Advocacy Center:

**330.262.1063**

**330.466.1159**

To report suspected  
trafficking and seek  
victim services...



# Additional Resources

- ***Trafficking in Persons Report (2021)*, United States State Department**
- **Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force**  
[www.humantrafficking.ohio.gov](http://www.humantrafficking.ohio.gov)
- **Polaris Project**  
[www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org)
- **Salvation Army**  
[www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/combating-human-trafficking](http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/combating-human-trafficking)
- **Central Ohio Rescue and Restore Coalition**  
[www.centralohiorescueandrestore.org](http://www.centralohiorescueandrestore.org)
- **U.S. Department of Justice**  
[www.justice.gov/criminal](http://www.justice.gov/criminal)