

Human trafficking (or “trafficking in persons”) deprives its victims of their most basic human rights.

Human trafficking is a complex and global crime that is not only limited to the developing world. In 2011, the U.S.-based **National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC)** hotline answered **19,427 calls** and **connected 2,945 potential victims** of human trafficking to services and supports.

Human trafficking means the recruitment, transport, harboring or receipt of persons by threat or use of force, deception, coercion or abuse of power used to lure the victims. Traffickers subject their victims to various forms of abuse, including sexual exploitation, forced labor, and domestic servitude, among others.

Victims of trafficking usually suffer multiple victimizations and may seek services at local domestic violence and sexual assault programs.

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center is a national, toll-free hotline, available to answer calls and texts from anywhere in the country, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year. They can be reached at 1-888-373-7888 or by texting “BEFREE” (233-733).

Although domestic violence and human trafficking are different forms of victimizations, there are similarities and intersections between these types of violence.

Women comprise the majority of victims of both domestic violence and human trafficking. According to worldwide data from the United Nations, between 2007 and 2010, **approximately 55% to 60%** of the total number of detected victims of human trafficking were women.

Both batterers and traffickers use power and control to dominate their victims, and the range of tactics used by traffickers resembles that of domestic violence perpetrators.

Common tactics used by traffickers include isolation, physical and emotional violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, financial abuse, threats to family members, use of children to manipulate and control their victims, withholding of food, sleep, and medical care, among others.

However, we know that domestic violence and human trafficking are not the same thing. Trafficking involves multiple actors and not a single abuser as in the case of domestic violence. Trafficking is an exploitation of female poverty and, generally, traffickers do not have an intimate relationship with the victim. Also, levels of endangerment and legal remedies available are very different for trafficked women.

What are the connections between domestic violence and human trafficking?

Because advocates working at domestic violence programs often encounter victims of human trafficking, it is critical that advocates know how to identify and help trafficking victims.

Victim-centered advocacy, confidentiality and safety are foremost to advocates and critical to working with both domestic and sexual violence victims and victims of trafficking.

As with domestic violence, it is important that survivors understand all of the available options, including possible immigration relief such as the T visa for victims of trafficking and the U visa for victims of designated crimes, as well as possible access to public benefits or other forms of assistance.

Advocacy for trafficked women differs from that provided to battered women. Although advocates are used to working with legal and social service systems, working with trafficked victims challenges the way advocates typically interact with systems and collaborate with other agencies or providers.

Our program has taken the following steps to assist victims of human trafficking:

Survivor story or anecdote to illustrate your point:

Advocates should use caution in citing cases of human trafficking in their communities unless those cases have already received a lot of media attention. If needed, sample stories are available on the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) website under “Call Vignettes.” The vignettes are representative of the types of calls received by NHTRC and are meant for informational purposes only.

Program Information:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



What are the connections between domestic violence and human trafficking?

References and Citations

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Source: Polaris Project. (2012). *Annual Report 2011 - Increasing Awareness and Engagement: Strengthening the National Response to Human Trafficking in the U.S.* Washington, DC.

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Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2012). *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2012.* Vienna, Austria.

- Victims of trafficking usually suffer multiple victimizations and may seek services at local domestic violence and sexual assault programs.

Source: Dabby, F. C. (Revised 2013, July). *Trafficking: Considerations & Recommendations For Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Programs.* San Francisco, CA: The Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence.

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Source: The Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence. (2002). *Health Issues Affecting Trafficked Individuals.* San Francisco, CA.

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Additional information

- Where to find human trafficking assistance and information (abbreviated listing):

Asian and Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence

Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW)

Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST)

Freedom Network

Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW)

HumanTrafficking.org

National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC)

Polaris Project