

**“Faces of Human Trafficking”, taken from
Human Trafficking in the United States: Promoting Community Awareness
Written Transcript
Bureau of Justice Assistance and Institute for Intergovernmental Research**

Male Narrator:

Human Trafficking:

- Modern day slavery in the form of forced labor, domestic servitude, or sex trafficking.
- A crime that deprives victims of their human rights and freedoms.

Human traffickers prey on the vulnerable—the poor, the homeless, and the disenfranchised. They often target children and young women. The promise of a better life, a job, or more education is often enough to lure victims away from their homes.

Human trafficking has many faces. The victims are not distinguished by race, gender, age, or national origin.

The victims are:

- Young American women lured into sex trafficking by promises of modeling and acting contracts by a man in Georgia.
- Four Filipino women forced into involuntary servitude at a local hotel in South Dakota and made to work up to 18 hours per day.
- Mexican and Guatemalan men enslaved as agricultural laborers in Florida by a family that was interested only in seeking financial gain. The men were restrained and locked up in trucks and forced to work.
- Two Indonesian women forced into domestic labor by a wealthy Long Island couple. The wife coerced, threatened, psychologically abused, and beat the victims.
- American women and girls coerced into commercial sex acts by a Connecticut man who operated a multistate sex-trafficking operation. He intimidated, threatened, confined, humiliated, beat, and raped his victims.
- Adults and children.
- Male and female.
- All vulnerable victims.
- All faces of human trafficking in the world today.

Unfortunately, these stories and others like them are happening around the globe. In Mexico, Romania, China, India, Indonesia, Ghana, Germany, Egypt, France, Honduras, Morocco, Greece, the United States, Canada, Argentina, and the list goes on.

Human trafficking is driven by, and linked to, many other criminal activities, including document fraud, money laundering, and migrant smuggling. Traffickers range from sophisticated criminal organizations to mom-and-pop operations.

Wherever there is a need for cheap labor and a vulnerable population, there is a market for human traffickers. Many segments of our society may find themselves susceptible to the promises made by traffickers. Victims may be runaways, substance abusers, the homeless, or others vulnerable to the traffickers. Foreign victims may be legal or illegal immigrants often lured and deceived into believing that job opportunities and a better life await them. The victims may even travel here willingly, unaware that forced labor or forced prostitution awaits them.

Human trafficking happens—in big cities, small towns, and rural areas. It occurs in farm labor, construction and landscaping, domestic work, and child care, and involves any form of sexual exploitation in prostitution and the commercial sexual abuse of children.

Although law enforcement is typically the first to become aware of a possible human trafficking incident, community members are also likely to encounter human trafficking victims or a trafficking situation. So how will you recognize a human trafficking victim?

While one indicator alone may not be enough cause, several indicators combined could be a warning sign that should be reported to authorities. Some of the first indicators the community may encounter are general. For example, the victim may:

- Allow others to speak for them.
- Provide seemingly rehearsed answers to direct questions.
- Be fearful of the police or other authority figures.
- Not make eye contact.
- Appear nervous or scared.

Physical indicators could include signs of

- Injuries inflicted from beatings or weapons.
- Signs of torture, such as cigarette burns.
- Branding or scarring to indicate ownership.
- Malnourishment or poor physical condition.

Living and working conditions for human trafficking victims may include:

- *Living* on or near their work premises.
- Being restricted or controlled in their movement.
- Being frequently moved from one location to another.

- Living in a very small *space with a large number of people*.

What should you do if you suspect human trafficking?

Contact your local authorities and provide as much detail as possible.

Human trafficking is a crime. It violates basic human rights. It occurs in hidden corners across this country and the world.

Human trafficking is forced labor and servitude, whether performed in a field, a factory, or a home.

It is commercial sex trafficking—a horror no one, especially a minor, should ever have to endure.

Human trafficking is not a remnant of a dark and distant past. It is a reality for today's human trafficking victims.

Have you seen my face?