



Parent Resource Guide

To

Student Guide to Preventing Human Trafficking

Combating Trafficking in Persons (CTIP)

Program Management Office

U.S. Department of Defense

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I. Introduction

This is a Parent Resource Guide for the Department of Defense (DoD) Combating Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) Student Guide to Preventing Human Trafficking. Your teen will be able to access the course through a DoD link accessible from the CTIP website.

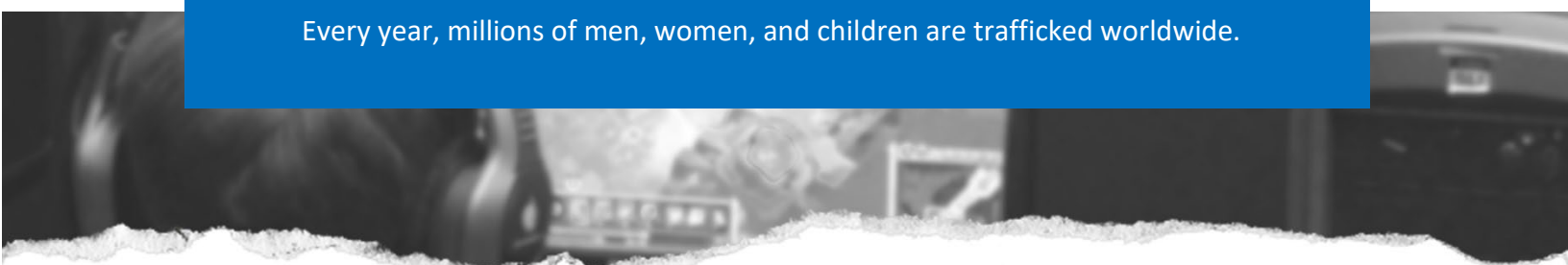
The CTIP Student Guide to Preventing Human Trafficking is designed to help your teen learn about human trafficking, to recognize the signs and indicators of human trafficking, and to respond appropriately. The course helps teens understand how human trafficking is occurring in student settings and particularly online where exploitation of children and teens is increasingly occurring today.

The purpose of the training is to strengthen your teen’s ability to recognize human trafficking and to encourage them to seek help from a trusted adult if they or their friends are being trafficked or suspect human trafficking. The training relies on the latest evidence-based information about how to reach teens and inform them. For example, it uses near-peer stories, survivor stories, and interactive quizzes to engage students. It also emphasizes the strengths and resilience that military-connected teens already have to help prevent human trafficking.

Human Trafficking:

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

Every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked worldwide.



II. Why the CTIP Student Guide to Preventing Human Trafficking?

A. Statistics on Child Trafficking in the US

Human trafficking is a serious crime that involves exploiting a person for labor, services, or commercial sex. Unfortunately, new research shows that, increasingly, minors are targeted and become victims. This victimization negatively affects the well-being of individuals, families, and communities. More than 63,000 cases of human trafficking have been reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline in the last five years.¹

B. Vulnerabilities of Children, Especially Adolescents, to Trafficking in Persons (TIP)

Every state in the United States has reported TIP cases. Children and youth are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking because they are dependent upon others for their welfare, they are trusting and don't always understand they are in danger, and thus can be more easily targeted and manipulated.²

New research shows that children who have experienced prior abuse, housing and economic instability, or suffered shame and stigma are especially vulnerable.³

C. Vulnerabilities of Military-Connected Students

Military-connected students face special challenges that could contribute to their vulnerability to human trafficking. These include:

- Separations from a parent or caregiver due to deployments;
- High mobility rates – active duty families move every two to three years (This is approximately three times more often than the civilian population. Students often experience six to nine moves during their P-12 school education);
- Academic and social challenges attributed to frequent school changes, deployment of a parent(s), return of a deployed parent, injury to or death of a parent, etc. ;

¹ Human Trafficking Prevention Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Trafficking in Persons, October 8, 2020 <https://www.acf.hhs.gov>

² U.S. AID Child Safeguarding Toolkit, November 18, 2020 <https://www.usaid.gov/PreventingSexualMisconduct/Partners/Child-Safeguarding>

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, OTIP, Ibid. See also, HHS Family Youth Services Bureau: "Risk factors that contribute to children running away include family dynamics, family violence, bullying, sexual abuse, and neglect. If these youth end up in the streets, without support networks, and few options to meet their basic needs, they become potential targets for [human] trafficking."

- Difficulties qualifying for, receiving, or continuing special needs services due to differences in regulation interpretations, testing required to enroll in or receive special needs services, and resource availability in school districts;
- Understanding and interpreting new school regulations and policies
- Elevated stress levels – making new friends and finding a new peer group in a new school; adjustment to a new school, community, and home;
- At-risk for depression and anxiety due to relocation, deployment of a parent(s), etc.;
- Adjusting to curriculum and instructional methods or school climate/culture that may differ from school to school. ⁴

For all these reasons, it is critical to offer the CTIP Student Human Trafficking Prevention Training to military-connected students through DoDEA schools and in addition have it available as an extra- curricular training for children.



Quote from Kaleilani Grant's testimony

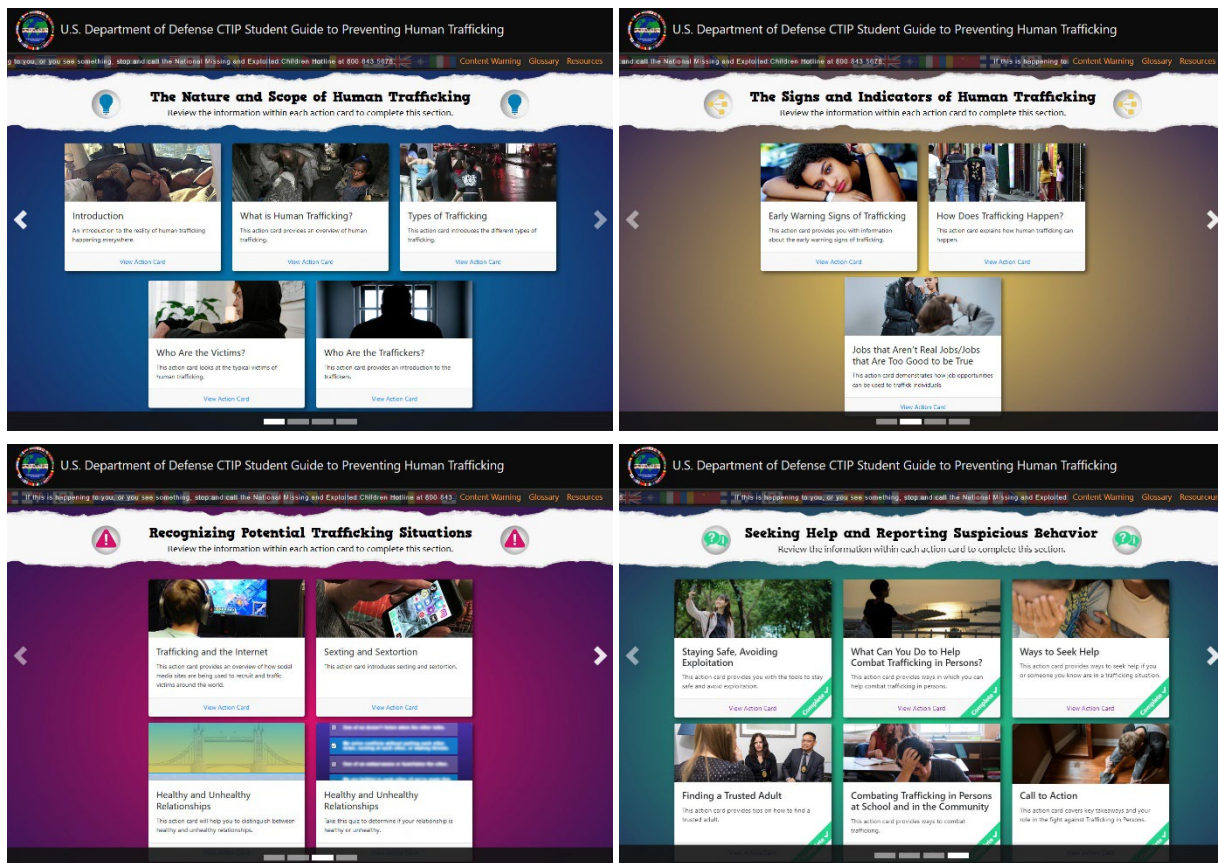
"I was born and raised on the island of Oahu, which is the main island in the state of Hawaii. I grew up from a working-class family. I enjoyed playing soccer as a kid. I attended private school my whole life. After high school, I went on to college. I had a career. I got married to someone who was a Marine. We had a child. Then, at the age of 25, I found myself divorced, getting back into the social scene, bars, night clubs.

It was around Pro Bowl in Hawaii where they had a lot of large events and parties surrounding the Pro Bowl. It was one night that I met a man in a nightclub. At that time, it seemed genuine, it seemed like he was just trying to get to know me, everything about me, where I lived where I worked, where my daughter went to school, where my grandmother and mother lived. At the end of the two weeks, he drove me to the track and he said, "This is the truth. I'm a pimp I own an escort agency and this is what you would do for me."

⁴ Military Child Education Coalition, "Who Are Military Connected Students?" <https://www.militarychild.org/>

New Mandates from Congress and The White House

Recognizing the vulnerabilities of students to trafficking, The Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2018 authorized a new grant program for local education agencies. The program is designed to educate school staff and teachers to recognize and respond to signs of human trafficking and to provide age-appropriate information to students on how to avoid victimization.⁵



⁵ Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2018, PL 115-425, Section 201; <https://www.congress.gov/115/plaws/publ425/PLAW-115publ425.htm>



III. What is the CTIP Student Guide to Preventing Human Trafficking Training?

A. Our Approach

This Resource Guide is meant to be a Parent Supplement to the CTIP Student Guide to Preventing Human Trafficking. The Student Training is divided into four learning objectives with 18 action cards divided between the four learning objectives (5-10 minutes each) on human trafficking. The Resource Guide follows the order of the Student Training and provides additional commentary and resources for parents. Parents can read the summaries of each action card in the learning objectives or take the training themselves to see what is covered.

B. 4 Learning Objectives

The Learning Objectives of the Student Training are simple. When your teen completes the training, he/she will have achieved the following learning objectives:

1. Student will understand the nature and scope of human trafficking.
2. Student will know signs and indicators of human trafficking.
3. Student will understand how to recognize potential trafficking situations.
4. Student will know where to seek help and how to report suspicious behavior.

Simply put, we want your teen to know what human trafficking is, how to recognize signs of human trafficking, and where to go for help.

A Learning Objective is an outcome statement that captures specifically what knowledge, skills, attitudes learners should be able to exhibit following instruction.

Learning Objectives

1. Student will understand the nature and scope of human trafficking.
2. Student will know the signs and indicators of human trafficking
3. Student will understand how to recognize potential trafficking situations
4. Student will know where to seek help and how to report suspicious behavior

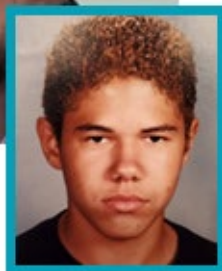
C. Action Cards

Action Card #1. Introduction

The first Action Card talks about how widespread human trafficking is and starts with two stories of high school students who were trafficked.



James' story is about how he was lured into a situation that became labor trafficking. To read or hear James' story [click here](#).



James



Theresa's story is about how a sexual assault in high school turned into sextortion and sex trafficking. To read or hear Theresa's story [click here](#).



Theresa

We open the CTIP Student Guide to Preventing Human Trafficking with these true trafficking stories of high school students in the United States to show that trafficking can happen to anyone. New research shows that storytelling helps people learn because stories are easy to remember. Experts have found learning that stems from a well-told story is remembered more accurately, and for far longer, than learning derived from facts and figures.⁶

Additional Resources:

- [Other Survivor Voices](#)
- [A Parent's Guide to Human Trafficking – One Pager](#)

Action Card #2: What is Human Trafficking?

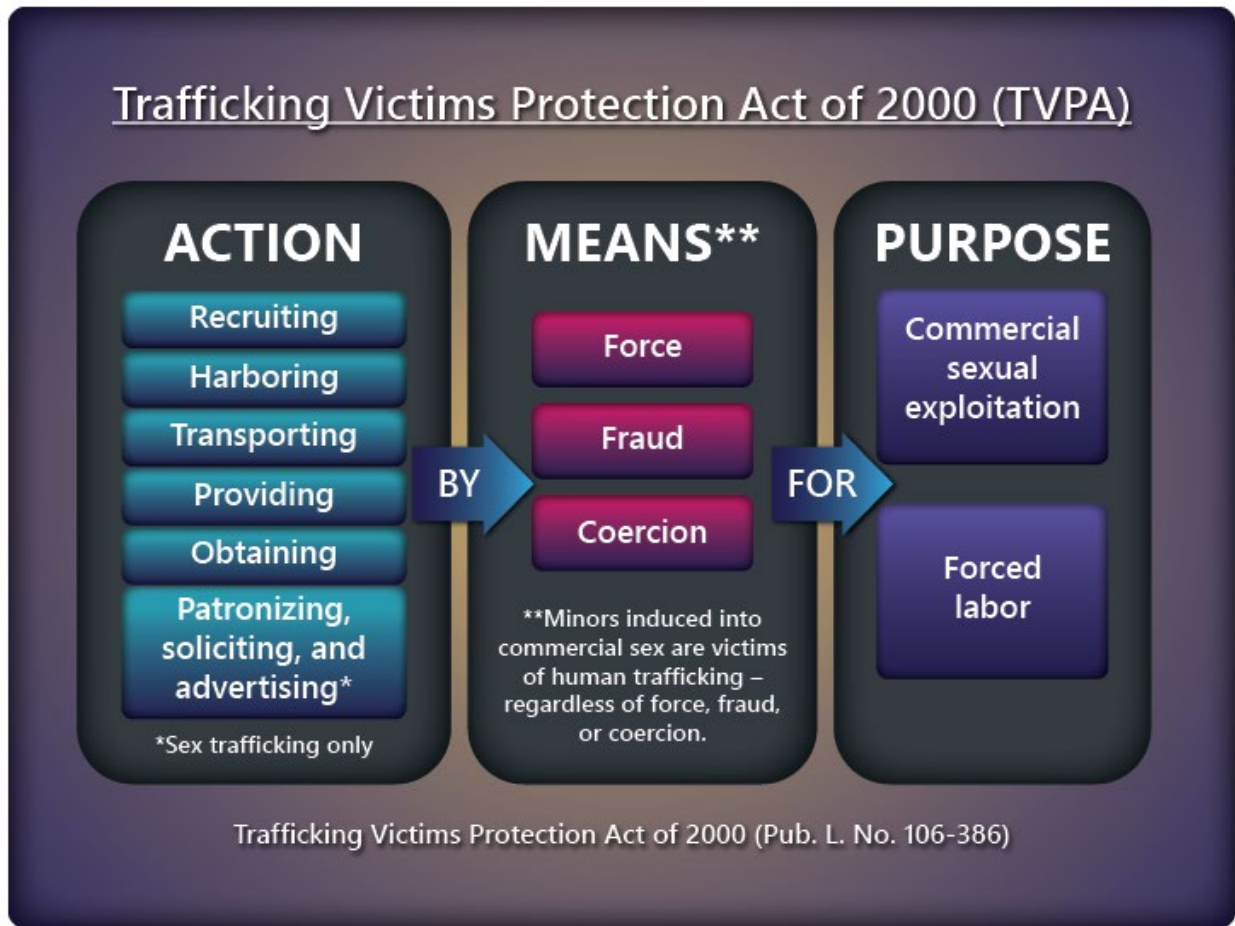
This Action Card begins with the definition of human trafficking from the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000.⁷ It shows that there are three parts or “elements” that combine to make the crime of human trafficking: the action, the means, and the purpose.



⁶ “What Makes Storytelling So Effective?” Harvard Business School, December 20, 2017, <https://www.harvardbusiness.org/what-makes-storytelling-so-effective-for-learning/#:~:text=Stories%20stick,derived%20from%20facts%20and%20figures.>

⁷ Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) PL 106-386

Students are presented with a chart to illustrate what trafficking is:



Notice that actions include recruiting, transporting, harboring, providing, obtaining, and (in the case of sex trafficking) patronizing, soliciting, and advertising. This list of suspect activities is part of the law and is purposefully long so that it reaches the whole pipeline of actions that are a part of human trafficking. The next element is the means by which the trafficking takes place and includes force, fraud, and coercion. We look closely at what each element means in the training, but we also note that **for minors, no force, fraud, or coercion is necessary in sex trafficking. In other words, a victim may be lured or enticed or convinced to perform a commercial sex act (without the use of force, fraud, or coercion) and it would be considered sex trafficking if the person is under the age of 18.**

Human Trafficking:

In the U.S. we have a law called the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (or TVPA). This law defines trafficking as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of commercial sex or forced labor.

The law also says that for sex trafficking of minors (anyone under 18 years of age) no force, fraud or coercion is necessary. In other words, minors are victims of trafficking if there is an exchange of sex for money or anything of value. This can include exchanging sex for a place to stay, food, clothing, toys, trips, drugs, or anything else that has value.

Action Card #3: Types of Trafficking

In this Action Card your teen will learn about the three main types of human trafficking.

Sex trafficking and labor trafficking are the most common types of trafficking in the U.S. We included a description of child soldiering because some of our military-connected students are in schools outside the U.S. where they may encounter news stories of child soldiering.

- **Sex trafficking** is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion. Persons under age 18 who are induced to perform commercial sex acts are automatically victims of sex trafficking (no force, fraud or coercion is required).
- **Labor trafficking** is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.
- **Child soldiering** are any children under the age of 18 who are recruited by a state or non-state armed group and used as fighters, cooks, suicide bombers, human shields, messengers, spies, or for sexual purposes.



Select each part of the map to see a few examples of human trafficking cases that have happened around the world, out of millions of cases that occur every day.

Europe

In Europe, women, children, and men are trafficked into the sex industry. Labor traffickers exploit victims in a number of other industries such as:

- Hospitality (cleaning and retail businesses)
- Construction
- Food Services (restaurants, farms)
- Domestic Servitude
- Forced Begging and Criminality



Action Card #4 and Action Card #5: Who Are the Victims and Who Are the Traffickers?

In these two Action Cards your teen learns that common stereotypes about victims of trafficking and the traffickers themselves must be set aside. First your teen will learn about teens and children who have been trafficked. Then your teen will engage in an interactive exercise to pick out the trafficker from a set of photos.

Experts agree that victims of human trafficking can be:

- Any sex, age, race, nationality, social or economic background, or immigration status
- Female or male
- Adult or child
- Foreign national or U.S. citizen

That being said, the Department of Health and Human Services has identified some at risk groups including:

Who is at risk?

Individuals from any class, religious, cultural, or ethnic group can be targeted in human trafficking schemes.

The following groups are especially vulnerable:

- Individuals who have experienced childhood abuse or neglect
- Children and youth involved in the foster care and juvenile justice systems
- People experiencing homelessness
- American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders
- Survivors of violence
- Migrant workers
- Undocumented immigrants
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- People with disabilities
- People with low incomes
- People with a history of substance abuse or substance use disorder
- Communities exposed to intergenerational trauma⁸

To this list we add:

- Service members, DoD civilians, DoD contractor employees, and DoD family members, including children because traffickers look for individuals in vulnerable situations. Military-connected students can be targets of traffickers because their families may move around a lot, and students are often the “new kid” at school. In addition, there may be stressors due to a parent being deployed, or due to injury or death in the family.

The Department of Education has identified the following possible risk factors for child trafficking:

- lack of personal safety
- isolation
- emotional distress
- homelessness
- poverty
- family dysfunction

⁸ From U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office on Trafficking in Persons website: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip>

- substance abuse
- mental illness
- learning disabilities
- developmental delay
- childhood sexual abuse
- promotion of sexual exploitation by family members or peers
- lack of social support⁹

In Action Card #5 entitled “Who are the Traffickers?” we ask students to look at six photographs and pick out the trafficker from the pictures. The photos include, among others, an 18-year-old girl, a pastor, a football coach, and a diplomat. It turns out that each one of them has been convicted of human trafficking in the U.S. We hope that this interactive exercise will help dispel stereotypes of the trafficker that we may have in our minds. Just as anyone can be a victim of trafficking, anyone can also be a trafficker.

Action Card #6: Early Warning Signs of Trafficking

In Action Card #6 we present a number of early warning signs of human trafficking in student settings. Some of these are easily identified by looking at and talking to a person. Others may be more subtle and do not necessarily present immediately upon encountering a person. Below are some common signs of human trafficking.

According to the Department of Education, possible behavioral indicators of child sex trafficking include, but are not limited to, the following:

- an inability to attend school on a regular basis and/or unexplained absences
- frequently running away from home
- references made to frequent travel to other cities
- bruises or other signs of physical trauma, withdrawn behavior, depression, anxiety, or fear
- lack of control over a personal schedule and/or identification or travel documents
- hunger, malnourishment, or inappropriate dress (based on weather conditions or surroundings)
- signs of drug addiction
- coached or rehearsed responses to questions

⁹ From U.S. Department of Education Safe and Secure Schools website:
<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/human-trafficking-americas-schools>

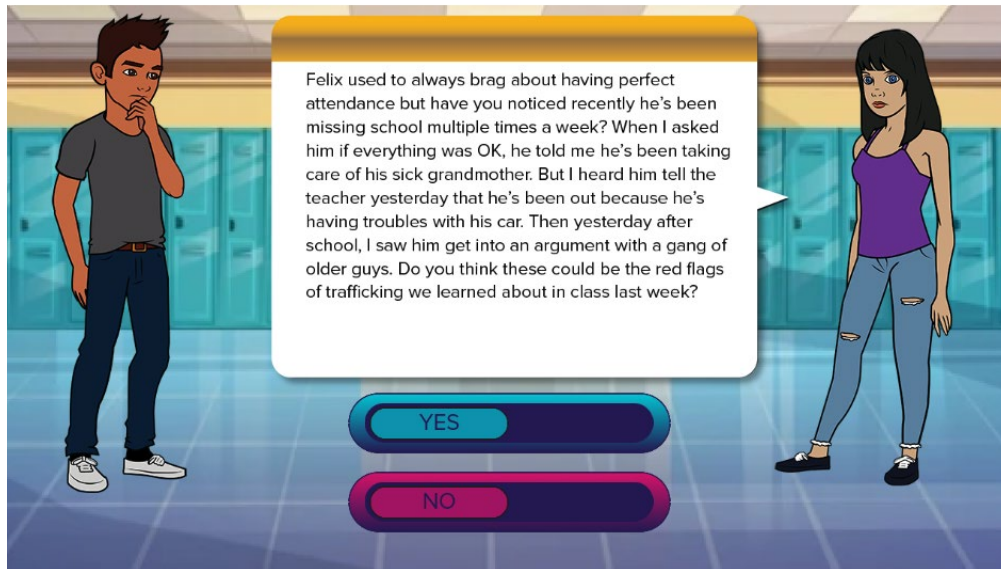
- a sudden change in attire, behavior, relationships, or material possessions (e.g., expensive items)
- promiscuity and/or references to sexual situations or terminology beyond age-specific norms
- a “boyfriend” or “girlfriend” who is noticeably older and/or controlling
- an attempt to conceal scars, tattoos, or bruises
- a sudden change in attention to personal hygiene
- tattoos (a form of branding) displaying the name or moniker of a trafficker, such as “daddy”
- hyperarousal or symptoms of anger, panic, phobia, irritability, hyperactivity, frequent crying, temper tantrums, regressive behavior, and/or clinging behavior
- hypo-arousal or symptoms of daydreaming, inability to bond with others, inattention, forgetfulness, and/or shyness

“Red Flags” That Indicate Human Trafficking		
Physical Health	Behavioral Health	Social/Environmental
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent treatment for sexually transmitted infections • High number of sexual partners • Multiple pregnancies/abortions • Exposure to toxic chemicals • Dental issues • Bruising and burns • Signs of self-harm • Weight loss or malnourishment • Respiratory issues • Suicide attempts • Physical and sexual abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusing/contradicting stories • Inability to focus or concentrate • Unaware of current date, location, or time • Protects person who hurt them • Minimizes abuse • Guilt and shame about experiences • Suicidal ideations • Extreme timidity • Aggressive, antagonistic, or defensive • Heightened stress response • Posttraumatic stress disorder • Withdrawn • Depressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absent from school • Failing grades • Sudden increase in substance use • Change in dress • Age-inappropriate romantic partner • Change in friends • Repeat runaway • Not able to speak for oneself or share information • Evidence of being controlled • Wears inappropriate clothing for the weather • Lives at worksite • Multiple people in cramped living space

Additional behavioral indicators for labor trafficking include, but are not limited to, the following:

- being unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips
- being employed but not having a school-authorized work permit
- being employed and having a work permit but clearly working outside the permitted hours for students

- owing a large debt and being unable to pay it off
- not being allowed breaks at work or being subjected to excessively long work hours
- being overly concerned with pleasing an employer and/or deferring personal or educational decisions to a boss
- not being in control of his or her own money
- living with an employer or having an employer listed as a student’s caregiver
- a desire to quit a job but not being allowed to do so



Action Card #7 and Action Card #8: How Does Trafficking Happen? and Jobs that Aren't Real Jobs/Offers that are Too Good to be True

In Action Card #7 and Action Card #8 students learn how to recognize potential sex and labor trafficking situations.

In her own words, a survivor shares with students how she was lured by sex traffickers posing as a friend/boyfriend. The survivor tells students that she was enticed using a web of deception, tricks, and lies into thinking that the trafficker cared about and loved her before the exploitation and abuse began. The Action Card focuses on the false promises that traffickers make to “capture” kids and traffic them.

In an interactive exercise, your teen will be given a series of offers that seem too good to be true. They can click each button to learn how the offer turned into a trafficking situation. In each true story we want teens to see that traffickers target vulnerable individuals by preying on their personal situations, such as their financial hardships, their struggles with low self-esteem,

or their family problems. They recruit their victims by appearing to offer help or pretending to be a friend or potential romantic partner.



Each of these scenarios is based on a real case where a teen ended up being trafficked. For example:

- "They say they can get you a big contract that helps with your acting career."
A young woman from the Seattle area met a man on a dating website. On the first date, he claimed to know someone who could help her with her acting career. After taking pictures ostensibly for her acting portfolio, they abused her and forced her into prostitution.
Source: [SeattleAreaManConvicted.pdf \(jten.mil\)](#)
- "They say you'll have a starting salary of \$80,000 for an unskilled job." A couple used the Internet and newspapers to post false advertisements about the wages and nature of employment at their homes. In the ads, they offered salaries 10 times the amount workers could make in India. Once the workers arrived at their home, they forced them to work 18 hours a day, depriving them of food and sleep. They did not pay the wages they promised. They kept their victims from leaving by beating and threatening them, burning the workers, and creating an atmosphere of fear and control.
Source: [HusbandSentenced.pdf \(jten.mil\)](#)
- "They say you can stay at their house for as long as you need to - without paying rent or doing anything." A girl posted information online about her difficult living and financial

situation. A man in Baltimore Maryland contacted her and promised her food and a place to stay. He sent a car to pick her up, but it dropped her off at a local motel where he immediately took a picture of her and placed an ad online offering her for commercial sex.

Source: [BaltimorePimp.pdf \(jten.mil\)](#)

- “They say they’ll rescue you from a bad situation” A girl posted about having run away from a foster care home. She was contacted by a person who offered her shelter. He brought her to his home and gave her marijuana, had sex with her, and then advertised her online. Over 300 men responded to a single ad.

Source: [BaltimorePimp.pdf \(jten.mil\)](#)

- "They say they know someone who can get you a great job - you just need to meet them in a foreign place." In early 2006, a contractor put ads in newspapers all over Latvia and Estonia. In the ads, he said that welders and pipe fitters were needed in the United States. The ads said that anybody hired would get a green card (permanent residency) and would be able to bring his family with him to the United States. The ads said anybody who was interested should go to one of several seminars at various locations in Latvia and Estonia. After an interview, Dimitri was told he was qualified but that he would need to pay a recruitment fee of \$11,000. Dimitri used his life savings (\$5,500) and was able to pay the other \$5,500 a week later by borrowing from family and friends. After paying more money, he was flown to the U.S. But once here, he was not given a green card; instead he was housed in substandard conditions and worked extremely hazardous welding assignments on rigs without safety measures. This went on for over a year before one of the men attempted suicide and the trafficking ring was exposed.

Source: [LMHT_0.pdf \(jten.mil\)](#), pg. 110-112

- There is a too easy process for getting a secure, well-paying job. A young woman responded to an ad by an employment agency for a nanny. The ad said no experience was necessary and cited a salary in the high five figures. When she applied and sent her picture, she was immediately contacted and told “you’ve got the job.” The employment agency sent her a plane ticket to New York City. When she arrived at Kennedy Airport, she was met by a man and a woman, who confiscated her I.D. and placed her in debt bondage, essentially telling her that she already owed them a lot of money for the ticket and for rent, food, and clothing. They told her she had two choices to work off the debt: stripping in Newark or performing massages in Brooklyn. She chose massages, thinking that she would be giving regular massages, but it turned out to be a front for prostitution.

Source: [LMHT_0.pdf \(jten.mil\)](#), pg. 174-175

- "They say they love you but they just need a little help getting the money together so you can live together and get married."
- "They say that you can come live with them in the U.S. and get a good education and free room and board"

Jobs that Aren't Real Jobs
Jobs that Are Too Good to be True

They say they can get you a big contract that helps with your acting career.

Click here to learn more.

Click here to learn more.

They say you'll have a starting salary of \$80,000 for an unskilled job.

They say they love you and want to marry you, but they seem to have other partners staying with them.

A couple used the Internet and newspapers to post false advertisements about the wages and nature of employment at their homes. In the ads, they offered salaries 10 times the amount workers could make in India. Once the workers arrived at their home, they forced them to work 18 hours a day, depriving them of food and sleep. They did not pay the wages they promised. They kept their victims from leaving by beating and threatening them, burning the workers, and creating an atmosphere of fear and control.

Source: <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/husband-sentenced-188-months-prison-human-trafficking-convictions-related-forced-labor>

Action Card #9: Trafficking and the Internet

In this critical Action Card, we look at human trafficking on the Internet.

The National Human Trafficking Hotline has received thousands of reports of trafficking on *mainstream* social media platforms including, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, Kik, Meetme.com, Tiktok, WhatsApp; dating sites/apps like Plenty of Fish, Tinder, and Grindr; gaming sites such as Fortnite, Minecraft, and Discord; and websites like Craigslist. Traffickers are using these sites to recruit unsuspecting children and teens, but they are also using these sites to sell minors.



Above is Karen, she is one of the four teen MC's featured in the CTIP Student Guide to Preventing Human Trafficking.

Over a three-year period from January 2015 through December 2017, the National Human Trafficking Hotline took reports of 845 potential victims recruited on internet platforms, including 250 potential victims recruited on Facebook, 120 recruited on a dating site, 78 recruited on Instagram, and 489 recruited on another type of Internet platform such as Craigslist, chat rooms, or a website that could not be identified during the hotline call.¹⁰

This Action Card helps teens understand that they may be targets on their favorite websites and that they need to be wary of attempts to contact and cultivate relationships with them on-line. We use real-life cases of traffickers who were prosecuted and convicted for trafficking children and teens using online resources to help students understand what on-line exploitation looks like.

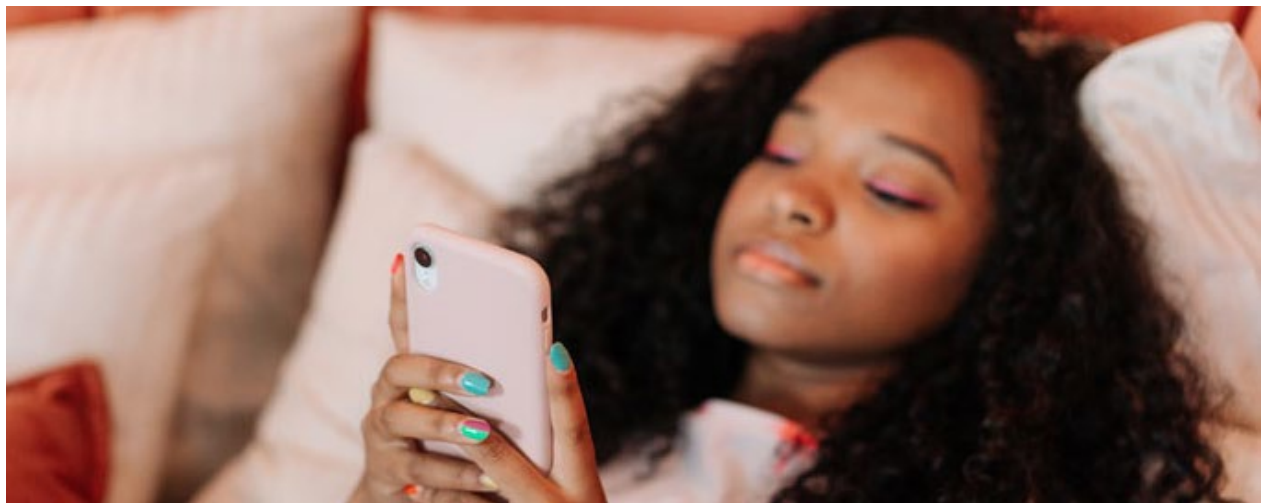
¹⁰ The National Human Trafficking Hotline Report

Action Card #10: Sexting and Sextortion

The Action Card on Sexting and Sextortion first defines sexting and sextortion:

Sexting is the sharing and receiving of sexually explicit messages and nude or partially nude images via cellphone. It can also include the use of a computer or any digital device. Sexting while still a minor is illegal. The reason it's illegal is that these images may be intercepted by, or distributed to, someone other than who it was originally sent to, compromising the privacy and safety of the original sender.

Sextortion is a new online exploitation crime directed towards children in which non-physical forms of coercion are used, such as blackmail, to acquire sexual content from the child, engage in sex with the child, or obtain money from the child. Sextortion is a global threat. What that means is, if you send nudes or compromising images of yourself via the Internet you can become a victim of sextortion.



Then your teen examines a real case from the FBI which shows how a 32-year-old trafficker posed as a 15-year-old boy on a variety of websites that teens surf. He made contact with and exploited over 350 teens by getting them to think that he liked them and was starting a long-distance relationship with them and then asking them to send explicit pictures of themselves and then blackmailing them by threatening to expose them to parents, friends, classmates and

others. Teens click on an audio tape to hear the FBI agents in charge of the case describe what happened.

Take a moment to view the steps you should take if you or someone you know is involved in sexting/sexortion.

What to Do:

- 

Say **NO** to your significant other, boyfriend, girlfriend if they ask for nude photos
- 

Find a trusted adult to talk to if you are being pressured to send nude photos
- 

REPORT suspected sextortion to a trusted adult, or law enforcement as soon as you suspect it
- 

Encourage friends to **REPORT** suspected sextortion to a trusted adult or law enforcement

#stopsexortion • 1-800-CALL-FBI • <https://tips.fbi.gov/>

Action Card #11 and 12: Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships

“In a healthy relationship there is mutual love, care, respect, trust, and honesty.”

These two Action Cards take your teen through some of the key aspects of a healthy relationship and contrasts them with characteristics of an unhealthy relationship. It does this through two interactive exercises. In Action Card #11, teens engage in building a bridge to a healthy relationship across a troubled water of problematic characteristics in a relationship. In Action Card #12, your teen takes a “personal quiz” that might be found in a teen magazine.



Above is Karen and Carlos, two of the teen MC's featured in the CTIP Student Guide to Preventing Human Trafficking

Students are often navigating intimate relationships for the first time. Understanding the difference between a healthy relationship and an unhealthy relationship is an important step in preventing exploitation and abuse. Helping students to identify their needs, ask for what they need, and speak up for themselves is an important part of healthy relationships. This section explores what a healthy relationship looks like and identifies the characteristics of a good relationship such as respect, honesty, trust, and communication. It also discusses ways to maintain independence, set boundaries, and give and get support.¹¹ The action card includes an interactive quiz that imparts information by using a light touch.

¹¹ Love is Respect

Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships

Check off every statement that applies to your relationship (whether with a significant other, friend, family member, etc.).

- We each control our own money.
- We have equal decision-making power about what we do in our relationship.
- One of us tells the other how to dress.
- One of us blames the other for our own behavior ("If you hadn't made me mad, I wouldn't have...").
- We apologize when we're wrong.

NEXT

Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships

Check off every statement that applies to your relationship (whether with a significant other, friend, family member, etc.).

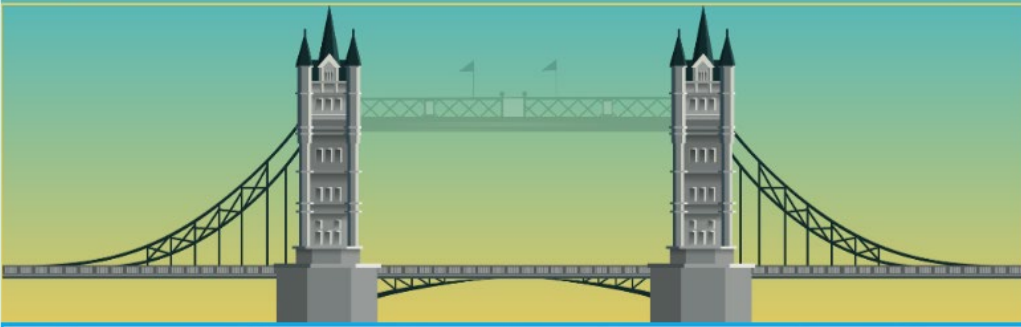
- One of us gossips or says unkind things about them to other friends.
- We always treat each other with respect.
- One of us does not keep secrets or confidences that have been shared.
- Neither of us feels like we're being pressured for sex.
- One of us threatens the other or their family.

BACK **NEXT**

See if your relationship results in a sturdy bridge.

Think about one of your own relationships (whether with a significant other, friend, family member, etc.). If the statement sounds like your relationship, place it on the bridge. If not, throw it in the water.

You feel anxious around the other person.



Try Again

Action Card #13: Staying Safe Avoiding Exploitation

This Action Card has practical advice for teens for how to avoid exploitation. In an interactive exercise, your teen will be given a series of stories with different choices that they can make. Some of the actions put the teen/teens in more danger; other choices help remove them from danger and/or contact a trusted adult who can help. In each case we want teens to see that the decisions that they make influence their vulnerability to human trafficking.

Once a person has been trafficked, many years are required for full recovery. Survivors report acute and chronic physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health problems. For minors, the damage can be deep and devastating. Some survivors have noted that long after physical illness and injuries have healed, they are still suffering mentally. For this reason, it is critical to *prevent* trafficking, especially for minors. This action card helps teens to understand how to stay safe.

It covers:

- Recognizing Predatory Behavior
- Setting Boundaries
- Making Good Choices, and most important,
- Seeking Help



Above are Grace and Kiley, two more of the teen MC's featured in the CTIP Student Guide to Preventing Human Trafficking

Action Card #14: What Can You Do to Help Combat Trafficking in Persons?

Action Card #14 gives your teen specific information on how to report human trafficking.

There is a federal hotline for reporting, but because our audience in this training is students, we have created a special partnership with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. This is the number we use across the banner of the training. They have a 24/7 hotline to call for reporting, and a 24/7 CyberTIP line for reporting trafficking taking place online.



24-Hour  **HOTLINE**
1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678)

Report Child Sexual Exploitation

Use the [CyberTipline](https://www.cybertipline.org) to report child sexual exploitation. Reports may be made 24-hours a day, 7 days a week online at www.cybertipline.org

In addition, we want your teen to know about other reporting resources. For reporting trafficking in DoD, the best number is the DoD IG Hotline:

DoD Inspector General Hotline

Hotline Phone Number:

800-424-9098 (Toll-Free)

703-604-8799 (Commercial)

Hotline Complaint Form: <https://www.dodig.mil/Components/Administrative-Investigations/DoD-Hotline/Hotline-Complaint/>

Finally, the Department of Health and Human Services funds a 24/7 National Human Trafficking Hotline:

National Human Trafficking Hotline

1(888) 373-7888

SMS: 233733 (Text "HELP" or "INFO")

Hours: 24 hours, 7 days a week

Languages: English, Spanish and 200 more languages

Website: humantraffickinghotline.org

Action Card #15: Ways to Seek Help

“It’s Never Too Late”

This Action Card addresses practical ways to seek help. One of the messages we emphasize is that while we want to prevent human trafficking, it is never too late to seek help.

Across every page of the Student Training we have a banner and a button for seeking help. Essentially, it tells students that if they suspect human trafficking or related activities to immediately seek help. The banner says, “If this is happening to you, or you see something, stop and call the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Hotline at 800-843-5678”.

In this section we urge students to be pro-active in seeking help for a friend or roommate, boyfriend or girlfriend, family member, or even another student that they may suspect is being trafficked. We also touch briefly on how to seek help and who to seek help from. In a later Action Card entitled, “Finding a Trusted Adult,” we list parents as the first place to turn for help, and also give students some ideas for other possible adults they can turn to for help.

Action Card #16: Finding a Trusted Adult

In this Action Card, we help teens think about finding a trusted adult to talk to if they or someone they know are in trouble.

We discuss who a trusted adult is: someone who can provide advice, answer difficult questions, share their values and/or faith traditions, and help you especially if you're in an abusive, hurtful, or destructive situation or relationship. We emphasize that a trusted adult will give you the support and help you need and deserve, and that most teens already know a trusted adult who would be good to talk to. We stress that many times the trusted adult is the teen's Dad or Mom, but if their parents don't fit that criteria, there are other adults who can help.

We guide teens about choosing the right trusted adult and we give a short list of possible adults to consider. We share tips for finding a trusted adult including: Choosing someone you think is a good listener and won't be judgmental; Looking for someone that you have confidence in; and Seeking out someone who you think will know what actions to take. As examples of possible trusted adults, we give this list:

- Parent, grandparent, or other relative
- Teacher, especially a teacher who seems to understand the problem(s) you're going through
- Coach, sports instructor, or athletic director
- Guidance counselor
- School administrator such as a principal or vice principal
- School security officer
- Club or activity leader
- A friend's parents
- Religious leader like your pastor, youth pastor, chaplain, rabbi, imam, or elder in your religious institution
- Police officer or other law enforcement official
- ROTC or military instructor
- Social worker or community worker
- Doctor or nurse that you like

We also give your teen some suggestions about finding and talking to a trusted adult. Here is an excerpt from that section:

"One way to find your trusted adult is to make a list of adults in your life you could potentially talk to. You don't have to talk to them, just put them on a list to see what options you have. List every adult you can think of who may be able to help you. Once you have a full list you can narrow it down to the one or two people who seem like the best choice.

If you don't know what to say, I would suggest writing your problem down. This way you can practice telling them before you approach them. The most important part is actually making contact and talking. You can prepare them by saying there's something you want to talk about and you need advice or it's something important. My advice would be to start off the conversation by saying "I would like to talk to you about something very important" or "I need your help with a problem." This lets the trusted adult know that there's something important going on in your life and you trust them with that information."

Action Card #17: Combating Trafficking in School Settings

We end the training on a positive note, building on the strengths and resilience of military-connected students and their families.

There are 1.2 million military-connected children of all ages worldwide.

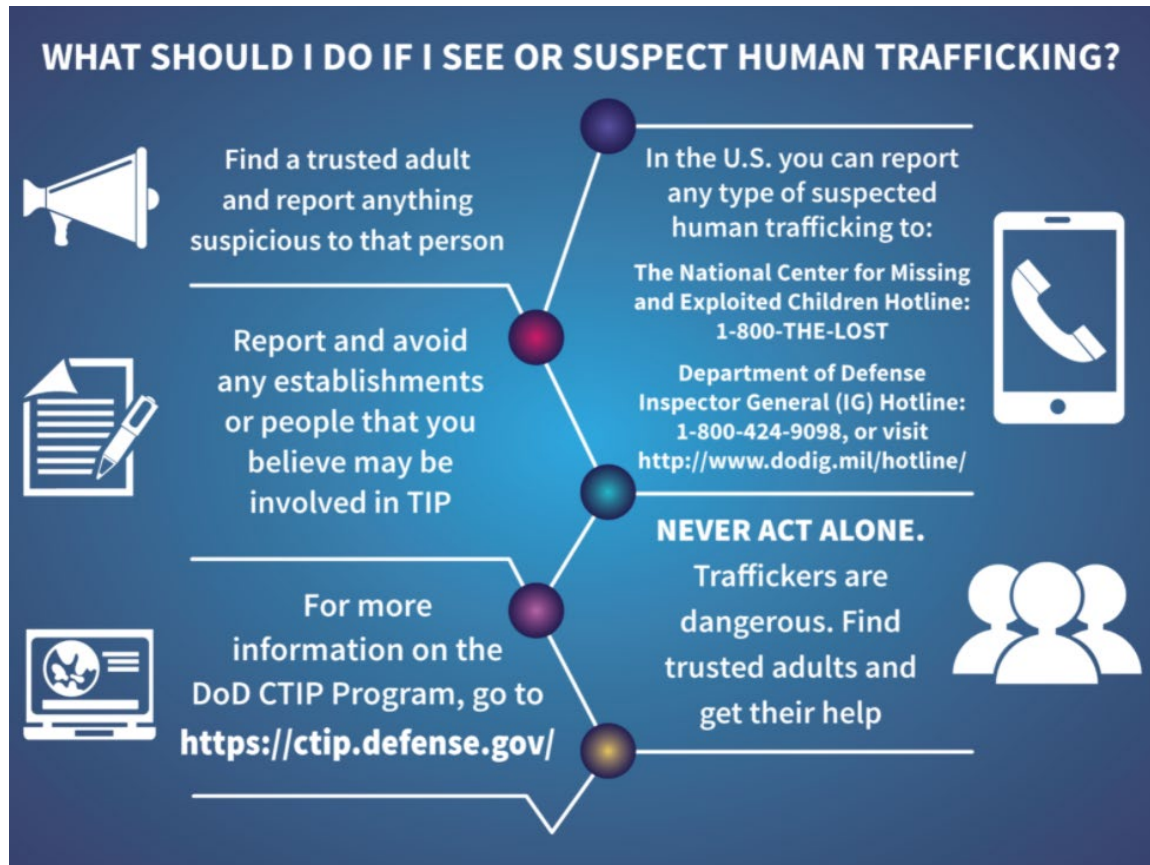
Military-connected students are unique and have many strengths including:

- 1) Intense educational experience
- 2) Understanding of diversity and experience with diverse perspectives
- 3) Resilience – the ability to bounce back and keep going even in adverse situations
- 4) Trained problem solvers; some have also received leadership training
- 5) Mission-driven and focused on accomplishing their goals
- 6) Service-oriented, volunteering more frequently than any other student demographic

We tell students that we want them to call on all these skills and strengths to help combat the problem of human trafficking.

Action Card #18: Call to Action

Action Card 16 is an Infographic – a one pager that summarizes information on how to get help if you or a friend or family member are being trafficked or if you suspect trafficking. It looks like this:



The essential information in this Infographic is:

What should I do if I see or suspect human trafficking?

- Find a trusted adult and report anything suspicious to that person
- In the U.S. you can report any type of suspected human trafficking to:
 - The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Hotline: 1-800-THE-LOST
 - Department of Defense Inspector General (IG) Hotline: 1-800-424-9098, or visit <http://www.dodig.mil/hotline/>
- Report and avoid any establishments or people that you believe may be involved in TIP
- NEVER ACT ALONE. Traffickers are dangerous. Find trusted adults and get their help
- For more information on the DoD CTIP Program, go to: <https://ctip.defense.gov/>

Conclusion

In this Parent Resource Guide, you have learned about the information we are giving your teen in the CTIP Student Guide to Preventing Human Trafficking. This information includes the definition of human trafficking, the main types of trafficking in the U.S., the signs and indicators of trafficking, and how to respond appropriately, including encouraging your teen to seek your help or the help of another trusted adult if they or their friends may be in danger of trafficking.

We hope this CTIP Student Guide will add to the resources already available to help prevent human trafficking of teens and children.

D. Supplemental Materials for Parents

Additional Resources

[Master Resource List for CTIP Student Guide to Preventing Human Trafficking – 2021](#)

HOTLINES:

1. [Department of Defense Inspector General \(IG\) Hotline ; 1-800-424-9098](#)
2. [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Cyber Tip Line ; 1-800-843-5678](#)
3. [National Human Trafficking Hotline ; 1-888-373-7888](#)

DoD Combating Trafficking in Persons Additional Resources

1. [DoD Combating Trafficking in Persons \(CTIP\) Website](#)
 - [CTIP TIP 101 Fact Sheet](#)
 - [CTIP Specialized Trainings](#)
 - [CTIP List of Signs and Indicators of Human Trafficking](#)
 - [CTIP Workers Rights Wallet Cards](#)
 - [CTIP Poster “Stop Human Trafficking” Awareness Poster](#)
 - [CTIP Newsletters](#)

DoD CTIP PMO PSAs and Videos

1. [Gross Violations of Human Rights](#)
2. [CTIP Trainings](#)
3. [DODEA Trailer for Training](#)

4. [CTIP Acquisition Professionals PSA](#)
5. [CTIP Investigative Professionals Interview Training PSA](#)

Other DoD Resources

1. [Family Advocacy Program \(FAP\)](#)
2. [Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office \(SAPRO\)](#)
3. [Department of Defense Education Activity \(for military connected students\)](#)

U.S. Government Inter-Agency Resources

Trafficking in Persons Reports and Foundational Documents

1. [Trafficking in Persons Annual Report](#)
2. [Attorney General's Annual Trafficking in Persons Report to Congress](#)
3. [U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking](#)
4. [Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services for Victims of Human Trafficking](#)
5. [National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking](#)

Trafficking in Persons Laws

- [Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2017 \(January 9, 2019\)](#)
- [Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2018 \(January 8, 2019\)](#)
- [Abolish Human Trafficking Act of 2017 \(December 21, 2018\)](#)
- [Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2017 \(December 21, 2018\)](#)
- [Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 \(May 29, 2015\)](#)
- [National Defense Authorization Act FY2013, Title XVII, "Ending Trafficking in Government Contracting"](#)
- [Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2013 \(Title XII of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013\) \(March 7, 2013\)](#)
- [William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 \(December 23, 2008\)](#)
- [Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 \(January 10, 2006\)](#)
- [Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003 \(December 19, 2003\)](#)
- [U.S. Leadership on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 \(May 27, 2003\)](#)
- [Prosecutorial Remedies and Other Tools to End the Exploitation of Children Today Act of 2003 \(PROTECT Act\) \(April 30, 2003\)](#)
- [Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 \(October 28, 2000\)](#)

- [18 USC Chapter 77: Peonage, Slavery and Trafficking in Persons Statutes \(Sec 1581-1597\)](#)

Trafficking in Persons Policies

- [National Security Presidential Directive 22 – Trafficking in Persons](#) December 16, 2002
- [Executive Order 13387, October 18, 2005, “Amendments to the Manual for Courts Martial, United States”](#)
- [Executive Order 13627, “Strengthening Protections Against Trafficking in Persons in Federal Contracts,” September 25, 2012](#)
- [Executive Order 13773, February 9, 2017, “Enforcing Federal Law with Respect to Transnational Criminal Organizations and Preventing International Trafficking”](#)

U.S Government Agency Resources on Trafficking in Persons

1. [Federal Response on Human Trafficking](#)
2. Department of State [Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons](#)
3. Department of Justice [Civil Rights Division, Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit](#)
4. Department of Justice [Criminal Division, Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section](#)
5. Department of Justice [Bureau of Justice Assistance](#)
6. Department of Justice [Federal Bureau of Investigation](#)
7. Department of Justice [National Institute of Justice](#)
8. Department of Labor [Bureau of International Labor Affairs](#)
9. Department of Labor [Wage and Hour Division](#)
10. Department of Health and Human Services [Office on Trafficking in Persons](#)
11. Department of Homeland Security [Blue Campaign](#)
12. Department of Transportation [Put the Brakes on Human Trafficking](#)
13. US AID [Countering Trafficking in Persons Program](#)
14. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [New Frontier in War Against Labor Trafficking](#)
15. [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children \(NCMEC\)](#)



IV. Protecting Your Children – What Parents Can Do

A. 10 Steps Parents Can Take to Prevent Trafficking

1. Learn and understand “what is human trafficking?” <https://ctip.defense.gov/What-is-TIP/>
2. Know the signs and indicators of trafficking in persons. <https://ctip.defense.gov/What-is-TIP/>
3. Be informed: The DoD has a Combating Trafficking Program Management Office including a website, newsletter, and resources about combating TIP. <https://ctip.defense.gov/Resources/>
4. Be aware who your teen is connecting with online—monitor their online activity, cellphones, computers, gaming and other devices.
5. Know the people who are around your teen (friends, acquaintances, teammates).
6. Speak to your teen about human trafficking. <https://ctip.defense.gov/What-is-TIP/>
7. Be your teen’s trusted adult— encourage your teen to seek your help or the help of another trusted adult if they or their friends may be in danger of trafficking or any other serious problem.
8. Avoid establishments or people that you believe may be involved in TIP. <https://ctip.defense.gov/What-is-TIP/>
9. Pay attention to your teens: look for changes in their behavior. <https://ctip.defense.gov/What-is-TIP/>
10. Know where to report human trafficking. If you see or suspect human trafficking, report it immediately. <https://ctip.defense.gov/What-is-TIP/>

B. Red Flags/Signs and Indicators

"Red Flags" That Indicate Human Trafficking		
Physical Health	Behavioral Health	Social/Environmental
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frequent treatment for sexually transmitted infections• High number of sexual partners• Multiple pregnancies/abortions• Exposure to toxic chemicals• Dental issues• Bruising and burns• Signs of self-harm• Weight loss or malnourishment• Respiratory issues• Suicide attempts• Physical and sexual abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confusing/contradicting stories• Inability to focus or concentrate• Unaware of current date, location, or time• Protects person who hurt them• Minimizes abuse• Guilt and shame about experiences• Suicidal ideations• Extreme timidity• Aggressive, antagonistic, or defensive• Heightened stress response• Posttraumatic stress disorder• Withdrawn• Depressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Absent from school• Failing grades• Sudden increase in substance use• Change in dress• Age-inappropriate romantic partner• Change in friends• Repeat runaway• Not able to speak for oneself or share information• Evidence of being controlled• Wears inappropriate clothing for the weather• Lives at worksite• Multiple people in cramped living space

C. Understanding Trafficking – No Force, Fraud or Coercion Necessary

[What is Trafficking in Persons? \(defense.gov\)](https://www.defense.gov/what-is-trafficking-in-persons/)

D. Survivor Testimonials

Theresa Flores



I was a normal every-day girl living in the suburbs. I was part of a nice family. I was a good kid. I got good grades, was a good athlete. But my father was an executive who moved every two years as he got new assignments from his company. One of the moves took us to a Detroit suburb, where I was the new girl – a sophomore in a big high school.

I didn't have any friends, so I was excited when "Daniel" offered me a ride home from school one day. He was handsome, cool, and older, and I was thrilled to be noticed. I thought he was amazing so I trusted him and accepted his invitation. When I got in his brand-new car, he told me he needed to run by his house for a second.

When we got to his house, he invited me in, took me upstairs, and gave me a Coke from the mini frig in his bedroom. After a few minutes, he started kissing me and I felt really dizzy. I had been drugged. I had always known when to tell somebody to stop, but when

I told him to stop, he just didn't. He got angry and violent and even though I screamed, there was no one in the house. He raped me. It happened in 15 minutes and it was devastating. I was Catholic and a virgin. The shame was huge. I didn't tell anyone, instead, I kept it a secret and tried to pretend nothing happened.

A few days later, Daniel cornered me in school and showed me pictures of the rape. Apparently, his cousins were hiding in the closet and took photos. He told me that if I didn't do what he said he would publish the photos and ruin my family. I was frightened that my Dad would lose his new job.

That is how my nightmare began – for the next two years Daniel sold me around Detroit. It turned out that he was part of a sophisticated gang of traffickers who sold me to powerful men who sexually exploited me in their own homes. During the time I was trafficked, my grades fell from A's to C's and D's, I dropped out of track, and was falling asleep in school. I

also went from being happy-go-lucky to depressed, sullen, and silent. My parents and teachers knew something was wrong but attributed it to teenage angst.

I escaped from my traffickers only when, after two years, my family moved again. Because the traffickers were well-connected in our community, I never told my parents or anyone else what happened because I feared retaliation. I wish I had told someone because the traffickers continued to traffic other girls. They were never prosecuted.

Kalei Grant



Good morning and thank you for having me. It is an honor to be here today.* I would like to share my story to inform and equip people to understand and identify sex trafficking. My hope is that this will ignite a passion from within to act and help bring about change. There is something everyone can do to end modern day slavery.

Today I stand proxy on behalf of the many survivors across the globe - those who were not able to survive and those who have not yet discovered that they have a voice. As I share, I ask that you take a moment and think of your dearest family members - your daughter, your son, your niece or nephew. What happened to me could happen to anyone.

At the age of 25, as a newly divorced military spouse, I got into a social scene in Hawaii. I met a man in a nightclub who I thought I liked. We dated for two weeks and during that time, he got to know everything about me: where I lived, where my daughter went to preschool, where my family lived, where I worked. I had a college degree. I had a career. I was doing pretty well. But I didn't know who he was and what he was about – he was very charming and seemed genuine. Although an adult, I was young and quite naïve.

At the end of those two weeks, he drove me to what they call a “track” – a strip or street where women and girls “work” as prostitutes. He told me he had many girls and women working for him and said, “The truth is I am a pimp. I own an escort agency and you will now work for me.”

Of course, I quickly disagreed. I said that wasn't who I was nor what I wanted to do. He then got out of the vehicle and went over to the corner and violently beat every single female that was out there until they were covered in blood, screaming, and crying for him to stop. He told me that is what he would do to me. He said he would kill me, my daughter, and grandmother if I didn't do exactly what he said, or if I tried to tell the police.

I was deathly afraid of him then, and those two weeks turned into two years of my life. He listed me on several websites including Backpage, Craigslist, and Red Book. He also advertised me in newspapers as providing "sensual massages." I was exploited. I was used by men who either didn't know or didn't care what was happening to me.

During this time the largest clientele was Service members. Hawaii is a state that is known as Paradise. It is a world-wide vacation destination. It is not a place where most people would automatically think such dehumanization exists.

But Hawaii is also a place where every branch of Service in the U.S. military is represented. We have large events such as the Pro Bowl, a football game known nationwide. We also have events such as RIMPAC, the Rim of the Pacific Exercise. It is the world's largest international maritime warfare exercise, held biennially in Hawaii during June and July of even-numbered years.

These events attract traffickers who bring in women and girls and also boys from all over the world. They do this because Service members were the main clientele looking to purchase sex. We would be driven to military bases and nearby bars, where the pimps would watch us look for the drunk military soldiers to proposition them. The transactions would happen everywhere - in barracks, in homes and apartments, on military bases, in warehouses, in military personnel vehicles, in personal cars, and even while Service members were on and off duty. On duty Service members would often see what was going on and turn a blind eye to it.

This nightmare continued for me for two years. Every single day I fought. To keep us under his control, the trafficker did terrible things to me and other girls. For example, he did something he called "timbing" where he would put on his Timberland boots and stomp on us forcefully, violently; that stayed with us. In this way he created invisible chains that kept me in bondage, and kept me fearful that if I told someone or tried to escape, he would kill me. I came to believe that there was no way I could get away from this man. Even though I fought with everything inside of me to get away. I did not want this life. I did not want to be

used and exploited. I wanted to be a mother to my daughter. I wanted to be a woman who thrived in her career and lived as a human being should. But I was trapped in this terrible existence out of fear, intimidation, and threats to my life and the lives of those I loved.

It wasn't until the Miami Super Bowl of 2010 that I was able to escape. The trafficker decided to take us to the Super Bowl there because he thought he could make a lot of money in a short amount of time. We didn't realize at the same time law enforcement was preparing an operation to sweep the streets of South Beach in Miami, Florida expectant that the Super Bowl would attract human trafficking activity. The pimp was caught and detained. We were questioned and for the first time in two years, people seemed to not only recognize that something terrible was happening, but they did something about it to help us.

After questioning, I returned to Hawaii along with another adult female and a 15-year-old girl that he had trafficked. The case made headlines and the pimp was convicted and sentenced to 22 years in federal prison.

During the time of the trial, I didn't know what to do with myself, but I began a process of realizing that I had been a victim of a terrible crime. Slowly, I healed, and I vowed that I would dedicate my life to helping victims of trafficking to obtain help and services - everything I wish I had, every service that I wish was available to me, I wanted to create for them.

And that is what I have done. Within my 10 years of professional experience, I have worked as a crisis responder under the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), and am currently with the State of Hawaii Department of the Attorney General Missing Child Center- Hawaii. Additionally, as a fellow of the Human Trafficking Leadership Academy (HTLA), I have been able to contribute toward strengthening policy and a system wide response to help victims persevere to survivor hood.

This HTLA fellowship was developed and delivered by the following agencies: Coro, Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP), the Administration for Native Americans (ANA), and the Office on Women's Health (OWH) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through the National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center (NHTTAC).

One last story I would like to share. I had the honor of mentoring a 15-year-old female military dependent. Her mother was a Service member and they lived on an unsecured base. Every day, this young girl would walk to school. Pimps have used this unsecured base as a place to target young girls. As she was walking one day, a pimp approached her. Told her she was beautiful, told her that she could do great things. He started spending time with her, grooming her to have a liking to him. He started spending time with her and soon after, she ran away from home with him. Her mother was a service member, single and engaged to be remarried. Her daughter was only gone overnight and returned the next day. She then ran away again and was gone for two weeks. When her mother questioned her, she said, "Well I have a boyfriend now and he loves me and we are going to do great things together."

It turned out that her new "boyfriend" was a pimp and had put her on international escort agency websites advertising her for \$200, \$400, and \$600. During the two weeks that she was away she was gang raped, purchased by many men, and the pimp took all of this money. She was posted on several websites; a lot of nude photos and also videos of her were posted online. With all diligence, law enforcement was able to locate, recover, and reunite this child with her mother. During the time she was gone, she was severely abused, assaulted, and malnourished, leaving her bruised, injured, and weighing 20lbs. less than her normal weight.

I share my story, and the story of this young girl, to provide insight on this horrible epidemic occurring within the United States. It is not like what you see in the movies. It is about ordinary people. They are not all from bad backgrounds, or a certain state or country. It can happen to any person, any sex, any age, any race, and any economic background. It involves Service members. It impacts families. Bringing hope by being the change I want to see in this world is what I do. There is something everyone can do to end modern day slavery. What will you do?

* Transcribed from presentation at the Department of Defense National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month Awareness event on January 09, 2019.

Tina Frundt



From the age of 9 years old, I was a victim of child sex trafficking. My parents abandoned me when I was young, and I was placed into foster care. My foster mother lived in the “projects” in Chicago, Illinois. Social workers never visited and maintenance repairs were never conducted, so I never said anything because I didn’t think anyone would respond. My foster mother traded us for drugs. I was forced to go to people’s houses and perform sex acts on adult men. I didn’t know what to do to stop my foster mother from forcing me to endure rape after rape. Because of the culture in the projects, I grew up viewing the police and the

government in a negative way and thus didn’t trust them.

A few years later, a family adopted me despite the social worker’s attempts to portray me as a “troublemaker” and not a good fit. I was finally out of foster care and in a stable home. But when I was 13, I met an older guy (he was 25) who lived in our neighborhood. He was nice to me and gave me rides to school when my parents were unable to do so. He told me that he was adopted too, but then given away. I bonded with him and trusted him. He worked on my mind to make me distrust my new parents. Unfortunately, none of what he said was true.

One night, I got into an argument with my parents about staying out past 9:00 p.m. I thought they were being unreasonable and I called the guy from the neighborhood and told him about the argument. He came right over and picked me up. I thought we would drive around a bit, but he said he needed to go to Cleveland, Ohio where his family’s business was located. At the time, I thought I was running away from home, but I soon found out he kidnapped me.

When we arrived in Cleveland, everything changed. I was locked in a room and forced to conduct sex acts on between 5 and 15 men. The guy that was so nice to me turned out to be a pimp, from a family of pimps. The first night I got there, all these men came in and out of my room – I realized later that the trafficker was “seasoning” me. After that, I was taken with several other girls to private parties, to military parties, to police parties, to hotels, and

to legal strip clubs where we were sold to make this guy money. I was 14 years old. I was in plain sight, but no one helped me. No one noticed the bruises on my body or an older man constantly by my side. I felt invisible and worthless.

One night, when my pimp wasn't looking, I snuck a copy of a key in an effort to escape with other girls. He caught me and beat me with an iron rod. Years passed. Then, when I was getting sick and not able to perform, he drove me back to my neighborhood and dumped me in a place where I was arrested and charged with prostitution. This was the beginning of a long life in prostitution. I went from one vicious pimp to another. I ended up in the DC area, where we were on Beauregard Street in Alexandria, Virginia, across from a DoD office building. Military service members and DoD civilian employees often bought me from one of my pimps – mainly on pay days when they were flush with cash. It is a longer story to tell how I finally healed, left the situation, and founded Courtney's House, the only African American-run, survivor-run program that works with boys and girls who are trafficked. What happened to me is still happening today and we need your support to stop it.

James Dold



During my preteen and early teenage years, my two sisters, two brothers, two cousins, as well as my nephew, niece, and uncle all lived in a 4-bedroom house with my parents. Because there were so many children in the household, my mother became a full-time caretaker; hence, my father was the only one really contributing substantively to the household income. My parents received assistance from the state for having guardianship and custody over their grandchildren and my two cousins, but it was barely enough to get by.

Money was tight with that many kids to feed. To ensure we had Christmas presents every year, my parents would go to the local pawnshop and use their wedding bands as collateral for a small loan. It was tough, but they made it work. My parents' grit and unconditional love for all of the children in their care would eventually influence my worldview, and incite my passion of caring for others. However, what later became a guiding moral compass for

me, at the time sowed anger, resentment, and a deep searching for love and belonging that I felt I was not getting at home. As a young teen, the difficulties of living in a low socio-economic environment, in which my parents were unable to meet my emotional needs because of work and having so many other children to care for, exacerbated the way I felt about myself; this in turn, negatively impacted how I felt about my parents.

For me, it did not matter that my parents were working as hard as they could to provide for all of the children in their care. They were trying to keep the family together and the children out of the child welfare system. I was left to my own devices in middle school, I felt empty and yearned for adult attention and affection, which made me vulnerable to exploitation.

My feelings of emptiness and anger were compounded by another complication—untreated trauma from childhood sexual abuse. When I was around five or six years-old, another child in the house sexually molested me; this sowed powerful feelings of guilt and shame in me. The child in question was not much older than I was, and in retrospect, had probably been abused as well. But for many years, guilt and shame boiled up inside of me, until one day, when I was about twelve-years-old, I finally built up the courage to tell my mother what had happened.

This made matters worse. After I disclosed the experience, my mother never made mention of it again. It made me feel like none of it mattered—what had happened, or the courage it took for me to finally tell her. This made me angry and resentful. Looking back now, it was a very difficult situation for my mother, or any parent for that matter, to be in. Both children were under the age of ten when the abuse occurred. But a twelve-year-old does not see morality in shades of gray; things are black and white, and the perceived response or lack thereof pushed me away from the attention and affection my parents did show.

My history of abuse, low socio-economic environment, lack of parental guidance and engagement, and the changes of puberty made me particularly vulnerable to exploitation. As I came into adolescence with a mixture of emotions and still struggling with anger and resentment toward my parents, I wanted to meet new people. A friend of mine introduced me to a nice, church-going lady in our neighborhood who took many of the kids on our block to church every Wednesday evening. This was my first real exposure to Christianity. I did not like church very much, but I loved attending the youth group—mostly because of the girls. I went to different events with the youth group for about a year or so until I ended

up meeting new friends who were a part of the Boy Scout troop associated with the church. I decided to join the Boy Scouts and I loved that too. I quickly progressed through the ranks, making my way up to Star Scout and becoming the leader of my troop. Most of the individuals associated with the troop were great people.

But sometimes wolves wear sheep's clothing. In my case, the wolf came dressed as a devoted wife and mother of another young Cub Scout from my troop. Emily* was about twenty-eight years-old with two children—a three and seven-year-old. I had just finished 7th grade and was thirteen when we met at a Boy Scout fundraiser. She and her husband took a particular interest in my cousin and me. We were both talkative and acted out. We were both searching for love and affection and we thought we could get it from strangers, and in the beginning, we did. We would often visit their house in the summer to help them clean up their yard and hang out. They seemed happy together and we were happy to be around them. But appearances can be deceiving, especially to children.

There was a lot of marital strife boiling beneath the surface that I simply did not recognize. Gradually, Emily started to take me out for fast food and laughed and played with me. It seemed innocent but as time went on, our time together became less and less appropriate. Of course, I did not see this. I was happy to be receiving attention, especially from an attractive woman. We would spend time together when her husband was not around. I became comfortable with and trusted her. I began to share some of my private feelings and personal thoughts with her; the rage and bitterness I had toward my parents; how I hated living in my house with so many people; the molestation that happened to me as a younger child. She did what every child predator does, she affirmed what I was feeling, and stoked the bitterness and resentment I felt toward my parents. From my perspective, she became my champion, she was the only person who understood what I was going through and the only person who truly cared. I became emotionally attached to her and even felt that I loved her.

At the same time that I was growing emotionally close to her, the physical barriers began to erode, until one day she was touching me in inappropriate places and kissing me. Barely in the 8th grade, the adults in church and Boy Scout leaders began to take notice of the inappropriate behavior that was sometimes displayed in public. After a few weeks, church members finally began to speak up. However, it is hard to imagine a worse possible way for them to have handled the situation. Some members told Emily they thought the amount of

time we were spending together was inappropriate. Emily used this to her advantage. She planted an “us against the world” idea in my mind. Here were these people who simply did not understand.

Her manipulations worked. I felt that they were trying to separate me from the only person who seemed to care about me. Soon after that incident, I left the Boy Scouts and stopped going to church. She did the same. No one called my parents. No one reported it to the police. It becomes quite easy to forget about issues when they are no longer in front of your face. For me, it was the beginning of one of the darkest times of my life. Over the next few months, I continued to spend more and more time with Emily. She continued to encourage the antipathy I had toward my parents and reinforced the love and affection I had for her, my champion. I had trauma-bonded with Emily.

As a young boy without many material items, someone taking me to concerts and movies, finding me attractive, showing an interest in me, and providing what I perceived to be love, created what I can only describe as a psychological prison. About halfway through my 8th grade year, we had sex for the first time. I will never forget how nervous and scared I was the first time. I lay there motionless, not really knowing what to do or what to say.

Emotionally and psychologically, I was still a young boy, having just turned fourteen a few months prior. I continued to spend increasingly more time at Emily’s house. She often requested small things of me; sometimes, it was to help her clean the backyard or the living room. She continued to drive a wedge between my parents and I, she convinced me that it was terrible that they forced me to live in the same house as someone who had molested me. The result was that I ran away from home my freshman year of high school and moved in with Emily who I felt loved me.

The lies I had been fed quickly unraveled from there, but only after I endured severe psychological torment. The love Emily first showed to me was slowly replaced by anger and mistreatment. It was sometimes emotional, sometimes verbal, and sometimes physical. I was called a “nigger” often as a means to degrade or punish me or inflict injury for some perceived slight. Sometimes the insults came from her, other times from members of her family. Emily’s marriage was disintegrating and they needed someone to blame. I became an easy scapegoat because of my dark skin color and because I was living with but not a part of the family.

By that time, I functioned as their live-in servant. I went to school during the day and went straight back to their home afterwards. From 8th grade through my sophomore year of high school, I took care of Emily's kids, washed dishes, cooked food, mopped floors, and cleaned every room in the house, whilst being belittled and abused, emotionally, physically, and sexually. I became even more socially withdrawn. And that is how I became a victim of child labor exploitation and trafficking. I was psychologically and emotionally trapped; I would do anything for the only person I believed actually loved me. It was a pain and a prison I could not escape.

At my lowest point, I remember feeling broken and helpless. I thought about killing myself. There was a handgun inside Emily's closet. After an incident in which I was again denigrated, I went into the closet, took out the gun, and closed myself in. I was alone, breathing heavily, and sobbing uncontrollably. I remember quietly crying to God and asking what I had done to deserve this. I looked at the gun and put it close to my head. I imagined pulling the trigger to feel the escape from the hell that I felt inside. I imagined what it would be like to be free from the pain and from feeling like I was living every day just to be someone's servant. I cried awhile longer and put the gun back. I would continue living in this hell a little while longer.

My bond with Emily was slowly broken over time. She had begun to openly see other men as she and her husband began to separate. My return home was an even longer and more gradual process that was only aided by the passage of time. The more I was away from Emily, the stronger I became emotionally.

One thing that really helped me was joining the junior varsity football team at my high school. My innocence was gone and I had seen too much of the world at that point to be able to relate to kids of my own age. Playing football was a refuge from the hell I had been through.

After the season ended, the freshman football coach recruited me to join the wrestling team and I did. I loved it, it helped me get my life back. Instead of spending every waking hour after school cleaning or taking care of children, I started spending it on the wrestling mat or on the track, running laps. After Emily and her husband separated, still feeling a misplaced sense of loyalty and belonging to her, I lived with her at her parents' house for a brief time.

Eventually and near the end of my sophomore year of high school, I finally moved back in with my parents. They were relieved but I think they really struggled to understand and respond in a way that would have been helpful. I had lied to them about the circumstances under which I had left. I told them that I could not stand to live in the same house as my cousin and with so many people. I told them that it would be easier for me to live with this other family. At one point, my cousin, who was aware of my real situation, told my parents the truth of what was happening to me. I denied it vehemently. I was trapped in a psychological and emotional prison that I could not recognize. I did not understand that I was being exploited.

As I developed a plate of armor around my heart and became emotionally stronger, I came to realize what Emily had done to me and what she had stolen; my innocence to be sure, but also precious time. More than two years of my adolescence were taken from me. When I should have been out playing ball in the streets, exploring new feelings with girls, and discovering who I was, I was instead quietly toiling away in abusive anonymity, cooking, cleaning, and taking care of young children. Traffickers and abusers take the most precious thing we are given as children—our love—and they turn it against us. They use the idea and promise of love, to get children to do what they please. In my case, it was living in a state of domestic servitude and frequent sexual exploitation.

Coming out of my situation, my perspective on the world and on life was radically altered; I did not know how to be around kids of my own age and I struggled to leave behind a very painful chapter of my past. No one really knew what had happened to me. So, when I would act out in class, or do or say outlandish things, people simply presumed I was a bad kid. But the truth was I was hurting. I fought to understand what I had just lived through and why it had happened. There were the continued distractions of high school sports that kept me preoccupied, but there was nothing to heal the emotional and psychological wounds I had, and no one to tell.

Once I was living back with my parents, I started hanging out with other teens in my neighborhood. I engaged in delinquent and self-destructive behavior like drinking alcohol, smoking marijuana, shoplifting, fighting, and causing whatever other mischief I could. In school, I always managed to do reasonably well in my studies. Transitioning back into a normal teenage life was hard, but the wonderful teachers and coaches I had made it easier. They became my true champions. They saved my life, though many of them could not have

known it. To them, I am eternally grateful. My high school friends were also pillars of strength for me, and helped save me too.

By the end of my junior year in high school, I had cut off all contact with Emily, my former abuser, though she regularly tried to communicate with me. I was able to have a relatively normal senior year of high school, save for my continued immature behavior. I started my first healthy romantic relationship with a girl at my school and went on to become the Captain of my varsity football and wrestling teams. I was given the Coaches' award in both sports and, after winning a regional wrestling championship in my weight class, I was named "Athlete of The Year" at my high school. My old high school wrestling coach used to say, "It's not where you start, it's where you finish." I started high school in a really isolated and wretched place, but hope, love, friendship, and others' belief in me, allowed me to win back part of my adolescence.

I wish I could say that after I graduated from high school everything awful went away and life magically got better, but trauma does not work that way. It impacts us in ways we cannot even imagine. Many survivors of childhood sexual abuse or statutory rape often respond either by becoming hypersexualized or developing a severe aversion to intimate contact. I had difficulty in trusting adults and girls of my age. It took me a long time to finally develop healthy relationships—platonic and romantic—with women. Into my mid-twenties, I found it difficult to come to terms with what I had experienced. I kept it secret and hidden away from the world. But it festered and ate away at me. I often worried that Emily might be doing the same thing to another young boy and I beat myself up over not having the courage to go to the police. Telling your story to the police is a terrifying prospect for survivors, especially for boys who are taught not to be victims. When a woman sexually abuses a boy, men usually respond with a remark or joke: "Where was she when I was his age?" A cruel double standard about victimization exists, which minimizes and ignores the rape and abuse of boys when the perpetrator is a woman. I went to college and then law school, keeping what had happened buried.

A mentor from my undergraduate years encouraged me to file a report with the police and I did. Unfortunately, at that time, the state of Nevada had a 3-year limit of reporting for child survivors once they turned eighteen. In other words, once I turned twenty-one without having reported the crime, there was nothing the police could do. I really grappled with what to do next and decided to work to pass the 2013 Nevada bill AB 146, which

criminalized the involuntary servitude of a minor. The new law made it easier for prosecutors to prove a child labor trafficking case where the circumstances clearly demonstrate a strong power imbalance, a particularly vulnerable child, and an exploitative situation. The bill passed unanimously with accompanying support from the Attorney General's Office and the entire law enforcement community.

The passage of the law was a vindication that what I had lived through was not meaningless. I went on to help pass 40 new laws to combat human trafficking. Today, I still advocate for children and fight for those whose life circumstances have left them devoid of hope. It is an important thing, hope. It is what allows us to turn tragedy into triumph. It is what brings us from our darkest place to our greatest glory. Hope transforms us and it helps us transform the world and the lives we touch along the way. I am still healing from what I lived through. And the truth is that I will never be who I might have been had none of it happened at all. I also am who I am today because of what happened to me.

**This is a pseudonym*

Ronny Marty



In 2009, in the Dominican Republic, I heard from friends about a recruiter who was coming to the Dominican Republic (DR) to find workers for large U.S. hotels and other hospitality companies. I had worked in a hotel in the DR and thought if I could get a job like that in the U.S. I could really help my family. I went to the place where they were recruiting and during two interviews, I was told that there were many jobs in the U.S. with great pay and benefits.

They told me that the employment required a work visa lasting nine months and said that they could get me the visa and a job to work in a hotel in Kansas City. They said I would have to pay a recruiting fee of \$3800. They also made me put down a deposit to hold my place, and later told me I would also have to pay travel expenses. But they said if I didn't have the money for the extra charges that I could owe it to the recruiting company.

I scraped together the money for the recruiting fee from family and friends, thinking I would be able to pay them back because the job was supposed to pay quite a bit. A couple of weeks later, I went by plane to the U.S. and landed in Kansas City. At the airport in the Dominican Republic, when I was given my work visa, I noticed that it was only for three months, which was different from what was promised in the interviews. That worried me, but when I asked about it, the recruiters told me: “No problem, the visa will be extended when the three months ends.”

When we got off the plane in Kansas City, some people from the recruiting company were waiting for me and the others who had come to work at the same U.S. company. But when we arrived at the first location where we would stay for the first night, we were told that there were no hotel jobs in Kansas City and we would have to travel to Huntsville, Alabama to get another job. When we protested, things got ugly. We were told, “Take-it or leave-it” – but none of us could afford to leave it because we had already put in so much money up front.

We were upset and worried because the recruiters told us we would have to pay \$50 each for the van that took us to Huntsville, Alabama. We didn’t have the money, so they said they would add it to the bill we already had with them. We were told we would be working for a DVD company when we got to Huntsville. We were around 12 people with luggage per minivan in vans built for 8 people and drove straight through from Kansas City to Huntsville, so it was a cramped and horrible drive. When we got there, they put 4 or 5 people in one studio unit and we were told that we each had to pay \$300/month in rent. Later, I found out that the apartment cost them \$400 a month, so they were making a lot of money from all of us. Because none of us had any money, this also went on our list of debts owed to the company.

The company required us to work 12-hour days. We were packing boxes full of DVDs, lifting them, and hoisting them onto flats for shipping. We were doing this back-breaking work 12 hours a day for 7 days a week. We did not see a paycheck for a few weeks and then we realized that the money we made was all going toward expenses. After they deducted airfare, van costs, rent, transportation costs to and from the job, sundries, and other expenses, I was left to live off \$40 per paycheck. Try to live on that per month. We were starving and getting sick and we were trapped in their contract with no way to get out.

After three months, when it came time to renew our visas, our petition was denied. We told the trafficker that we would not continue to pay for expired visas. We tried to leave but we couldn't get away. We were all in debt to this guy and we feared for our families. But as the work continued with no pay and even worse conditions, I stepped up and said that we wouldn't pay for the van that transported us to and from the job until we got our deposits back. The recruiter threatened my family and harassed them with dozens of phone calls until I got upset. I was exhausted and felt I had nothing left to lose.

We had heard some rumblings of problems already because the landlord manager for the apartments had said that she did not like the living conditions they were leaving us in. She told us that our rent had not been paid for the last month. I told her that we have been paying every month because the recruiter deducts the rent from our pay check, and I showed her our paystubs. That is when I realized the recruiter was paying only \$400 a month per apartment. Then, she called him to ask for the pay and he said that he would not pay. At that time, we felt so worried.

But the landlord manager spoke to the owner and they provided us with food. After the landlord spoke with the recruiter, she realized something was not right and asked me if I would like to speak to the Huntsville newspaper and I said yes. When the recruiter found out that I spoke to the news, things got worse. He called me and told me that we better stop talking to the news, so I complained that this wasn't what we were promised and that we weren't making any money and we were starving. Also, a couple of us complained about conditions and said we wanted to leave. He threatened to turn us in to the police and told me that we would all be deported. He also said that he knew where we lived and where our families lived back in the DR and made threats to harm them. I knew we could not do anything when he said that. The head of the recruiting company was Russian and so were the other guys at the top of the company. The middle management was Filipino.

When that happened, I called my family in the DR and told them to move out of the house for their safety. Then, we decided to escape and went to Biloxi, Mississippi where we met Mary at a Catholic Charities. She spoke Spanish. When she heard our story, she asked how many people were like me. I said I didn't know but I thought that there were hundreds. She said she thought we might be trafficking victims. I had never heard of that and didn't know what she was talking about. She called the Department of Homeland Security and Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents came out to talk to us. Our lives changed

the moment ICE moved in. They investigated and turned their findings over to the Department of Justice. It was the largest labor trafficking case ever prosecuted in the U.S. – 11 traffickers and over 500 victims (U.S. v Giant Labor Co). Ten of the traffickers were prosecuted and are now in jail. The 11th (the kingpin trafficker who threatened us by phone) escaped back to Russia.

By the time ICE stepped in, I was having nightmares and serious post-traumatic stress syndrome. I was afraid for myself and my family and didn't trust anyone. An ICE agent, Julie Gray, changed our lives by re-building our confidence and trust in law enforcement officials. The agent assisted in connecting us with the services we needed, such as housing, food, and work permits because our visas were about to expire. The investigators provided all necessary documentation after the case was closed for us to apply for T-Visas, which are issued to victims of human trafficking in the U.S.

I credit agent Julie Gray's passion and persistence to the training she received. Training in how to work with victims and providing victim-centered care is essential to helping victims of trafficking.

Now, whenever I go to any large company or hotel or restaurant in the U.S., I'm always asking questions about how the employees are treated, where they are from, and if they are in debt bondage.

*Transcribed from presentation to the U.S. Department of Defense Combating Trafficking in Persons Task Force Meeting, July 2016

Carlos Dimas



I grew up in El Salvador, raised by a courageous single Mom. I have two siblings plus another five on my father's side (from two other marriages). I grew up in the capital city, in an urban area, close to the soccer stadium, and had a challenging upbringing for many reasons, including an alcoholic father who also used violence to deal with stress. I remember one time he came home drunk while Mom was ironing his clothes. He demanded that she get more alcohol for him and when she refused, he knocked her

down, placed the hot iron on her chest and didn't let her go to the doctor. To this day, she carries the scars and marks of the iron.

When I was 12 years old, my father and mother separated. My mom ran from him with us in tow after she tired of the abuse. Shortly after that, I got involved in the guerilla movement. I was an angry, lost, impulsive, vengeful boy. At 14 years of age my best friend, Cabezas, and I were invited by the guerrillas to one of their meetings. Young adults wanting to talk to us was compelling by itself, and they offered the opportunity to hear some lessons (courageous stories of insurrection) on uprising (what I now see as brainwashing) against what they characterized as an oppressive system bent on subjugating the lower classes. They were a group of university students one block down from our school who intellectually had bought into Marxism and were looking for kids to recruit under the guise of wanting to make a difference in the country by forceful methods. It sounded very appealing at the time.

They used stories of abuse in rural areas amongst the poor and vulnerable and the working class who didn't have a voice. They came to our schools and presented in the classroom. After their presentation, they invited anyone interested in hearing more to join their fight. And, of course, a few of us as impressionable youth had a righteous anger as we heard the accounts of abuse, death, oppression, and lack of representation under the hands of powerful landowners heavily backed up by a corrupt government and the army.

This was the start of their recruitment process. I still lived at home with Mom and kept these movements a secret from her. I attended these meetings right after school and would then make it home on time for dinner. After agreeing to join the guerillas, I was considered in the early stages of the recruitment and needed to prove myself. Cabezas and I were taught how to recruit others, how to identify targets, how to be look-outs, how to prepare smoke bombs, how to distribute subversive materials, and other tasks to test us. There were hundreds of children being recruited from middle school and high school. We were all kept in different rooms and we didn't interact with other kids much.

Cabezas and I would do everything together and even talked about raising our families and naming our kids after each other. We were very close. He lived in a humble wooden home near a river. His parents had been displaced from their home and were left to live with little. He was such a good boy. Smart, tender, caring, compassionate, driven, strong, passionate. Maybe because of his size, he was moved to advance training, which was firing weapons,

carrying ammunition, marching in demonstrations, holding anti-government flags, and other key tasks for the guerillas.

During this time, there were death squads - para-military groups the army had deployed as civilians - who captured, tortured, and killed insurrectionists. These death squads were terrifying. They were sent out to target any uprisings in the city. Wherever they found a manifestation of uprising in the city, they would take pictures and canvass the area. Then, they would find out where the guerillas lived and go after them, planting all kinds of paraphernalia to justify the kidnapping, torture, assassination, and other fear tactics to try and quench the increasing uproar of the people desiring justice.

We heard stories in the neighborhood of families (parents, grandparents and children) who had been gathered by the death squads and put in the bathroom together and set on fire. We also saw bodies of young people beheaded, thrown on the side of the road. Most of them were tossed to the side displaying a sign or a warning regarding their involvement with socialism/communism. This was the army's way of justifying the killing of peasants and regular folks who maybe had made their opinion known or were raising questions of unfair treatment: they were quickly labeled terrorists and the killing was used to terrify others.

We had been operating as new recruits for about a year when Cabezas was captured by one of these death squads. He was sodomized and beheaded. He was so badly mangled that he was in a closed casket at his funeral. This experience marked my life forever. I started having nightmares of people chasing me and hurting my family. I would for years remember the angst and grief his parents went through - something I didn't want for my Mom or my siblings. It was at my friend's funeral that I experienced a wake-up moment, a change of heart and allegiance of sorts.

Thankfully, I was still in the training process – I had only done operations that involved small tasks and because I was quite a small, skinny kid back then (75 lbs. soaking wet), I had not been chosen to hold a weapon or fire it yet. There were so many young people involved at the time (I was in middle school) that I'm not sure anybody noticed when I stopped coming to their meetings anymore.

The challenge for the next couple of decades was trying to unlearn the insurrectionists' particular way of thinking and re-learn and adopt a new set of beliefs. That is where the church and a couple of mentors were key. I had a personal encounter with Jesus after being invited to Church. A week after Cabezas' funeral, I heard a message about Jesus as the

greatest revolutionary that ever existed and my heart felt so drawn to his character, approach, difference making ability, power, influence, love, and kingdom values that my life took a 180 degree turn. After hearing a message of a “God who is not a man to lie nor the son of man to deceive.” (Numbers 23:19), I felt intrigued by the reality of that message and broken by the implications of such love demonstrated on the cross. Soon after conversion, I got involved in the growing youth ministry through one of the church community groups and proceeded to multiply those three times over, eventually becoming a team leader and overseer for their community groups. I lived through Civil War in El Salvador, which only strengthened my resolve towards evangelism and discipleship.

I came to the U.S. after my mother remarried. She had rented a couple of rooms in our house after my father left us and one of them was to an American man who worked for the Peace Corps. He developed a relationship with our family, and eventually fell in love with Mom. However, when the civil war broke out, all the Americans were told to leave, so he packed his bags and returned to the U.S. He never forgot us though. A few years later he was allowed to come back and he proposed marriage to my mom. Mom joined him in the U.S. first, then my sister who was underage, then myself, then my brother. To this day, they are still married, living in upstate NY and running an African import business. I started as a small business owner and, through my parents, became an associate pastor. Then, a Young Life Area Director for another 19 years and now, with my wife of 27 years, run a non-profit that serves men and women of peace in Latin America and the U.S. We have a 25-year-old daughter, a song writer and creative diva, and a son who serves in the army and is stationed at Fort Campbell in KY.