

Human Trafficking: Pennsylvania Educators' Next Challenge

Why You Need to Know About Human Trafficking (HT) and Modern Slavery –

- On June 23, 2014, the FBI announced the rescue of 168 children who were sex trafficked. On July 29, 2013, 105 children were rescued; two were in the suburbs of Philadelphia and three were from Pittsburgh.
- Of 59 cases of HT in PA in 2013, 17 involved minors (Polaris Project).

What is Modern Slavery? Slaves are forced to act against their own will by force, fraud or coercion. Human trafficking—the illegal trade in humans—is usually for the purpose of sexual exploitation, forced labor or both.

Numbers of Slaves - There are an estimated 29.8 million slaves worldwide (Global Slavery Index 2013). 1.2 million children are trafficked each year (United Nations Global Initiative to End HT). There are 100,000 slaves in the U.S. (U.S. TIP Report, 2011).

Where is it? Although illegal in every nation, it exists in every nation but Iceland and Greenland. (Map by Free The Slaves)



Potential Indicators - No child (or parent) wears a label that says, "I'm a victim of human trafficking." Signs might masquerade as different problems. Potential indicators:

- * misses a lot of school, has run away
- * lacks control of schedule
- * vague or changing stories
- * unusually fearful of authority
- * malnourished, unhealthy, suicidal
- * has no documents, speaks another language
- * has older boyfriend, expensive items, over-sexualized behaviors
- * signs of abuse

The average age of entry into sex trafficking is 13. Vulnerable boys and girls are affected. Although poverty and homelessness can lead to victimization, victims can come from any socioeconomic background. Victims rarely see themselves as victims.

What to do if a child discloses – 1. Stay calm. 2. Build rapport in a non-threatening, non-judgmental, non-authoritative atmosphere. 3. Validate their feelings. Believe them. 4. Use their language around sex terms. 5. Follow rules for mandated reporting.

Important Sources

- Polaris project – www.polarisproject.org
- Free the Slaves – www.freetheslaves.net
- U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services – Flier for medical personnel/school nurses - www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/orr/health_care_brochure_english.pdf
- **National Human Trafficking Hotline** for tipsters and victims – [1-888-3737-888](tel:1-888-3737-888)