



Common Human Trafficking Questions

What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is defined as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons through the use of force, coercion, fraud, deception, or abuse of power for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can take various forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labor, and the removal of organs. (Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, 2000)

Is Human Trafficking the same as Modern Day Slavery?

Short answer is yes.

Modern-day slavery is a broad term used to describe various forms of exploitation where one person's freedom is restricted by another, forcing them to work or provide services against their will. This includes human trafficking, forced labor, debt bondage, forced marriage, and other practices similar to slavery. The common factor in all forms of modern-day slavery is the use of coercion, deception, or force to exploit individuals for personal or commercial gain. (Source: International Labour Organization, Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage, 2017)

Who Can Fall Victim to Human Trafficking?

Anyone can potentially fall victim to human trafficking, regardless of age, gender, nationality, or socioeconomic background. However, certain individuals and groups are more vulnerable to trafficking due to factors such as poverty, lack of education, social marginalization, and limited access to resources or support systems.

Some of the most vulnerable populations include:

1. Children and youth, particularly those living in poverty or unstable home environments.
2. Women and girls, who are disproportionately targeted for sex trafficking and forced marriage.
3. Migrants and refugees, who may face language barriers, limited legal protections, and isolation from their support networks.
4. Members of marginalized racial, ethnic, or religious groups, who may experience social exclusion and discrimination.
5. Individuals with disabilities, who may be particularly vulnerable due to social isolation or dependency on others for care.
6. LGBTQ+ individuals, who may face family rejection, discrimination, or violence, increasing their vulnerability to trafficking.

It is important to note that human trafficking can affect anyone, and traffickers often exploit pre-existing vulnerabilities or use deception and manipulation to lure victims into exploitative situations. (Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, 2020)



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Is human trafficking the same as smuggling?

No, human trafficking and smuggling are not the same. Smuggling involves illegal border crossings and is a crime against a state's borders, while human trafficking involves exploitation and is a crime against an individual (UNODC on Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling).

Where does human trafficking occur?

Human trafficking occurs globally, in every country and community. It's a transnational crime that doesn't respect borders, affecting both developed and developing nations (United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children).

What can be done to stop human trafficking?

Measures to stop human trafficking include public awareness campaigns, stronger laws and law enforcement training, victim support services, and improving social and economic conditions that make individuals vulnerable to trafficking (U.S. Department of State).

What are the signs of human trafficking?

Signs of human trafficking can include individuals who appear controlled, show signs of physical abuse, can't speak for themselves, or have no personal identification on them. They may work excessively long hours, live where they work, or appear afraid, anxious, depressed, or overly submissive (National Human Trafficking Hotline).

What should I do if I suspect someone is a victim of human trafficking?

If you suspect someone is a victim of human trafficking, it's crucial not to put yourself or the suspected victim at risk. Instead, contact your local law enforcement or the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888 (National Human Trafficking Hotline).

Are there laws against human trafficking?

Yes, human trafficking is illegal under international law and in almost every country. For example, the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children criminalizes all forms of human trafficking (United Nations).

How are victims of human trafficking helped?

Organizations globally provide services to survivors, such as legal aid, mental health services, housing, education, job training, and medical care. The ultimate goal is to help survivors regain their independence and reintegrate into society (Polaris, The Facts).