

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: Perception, Prevention and Protection



A Discussion Guide for
Public Deliberation

Welcome to the Forum!

About the Discussion Guide

This discussion guide was designed to propose ideas on how to bring awareness to human trafficking, how to prevent it from happening, and how to provide aid to victims of human trafficking.

During this forum, we'll work together to:

1. Better understand how people are brought into slavery and how their lives change if they escape.
2. Discuss the different approaches to lessen or eliminate human trafficking.
3. Identify actions that are likely to make a difference in the lives of victims.
4. Explore potential actions and next steps.

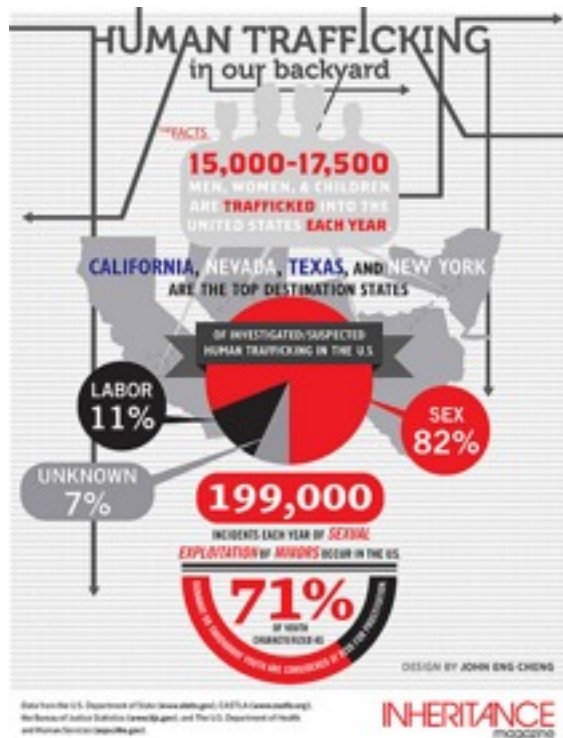
This was the work of a small group public deliberation class. The research is done from the perspective of students and focuses on the issue of human trafficking and what can be done to begin to mend the issue.



Overview

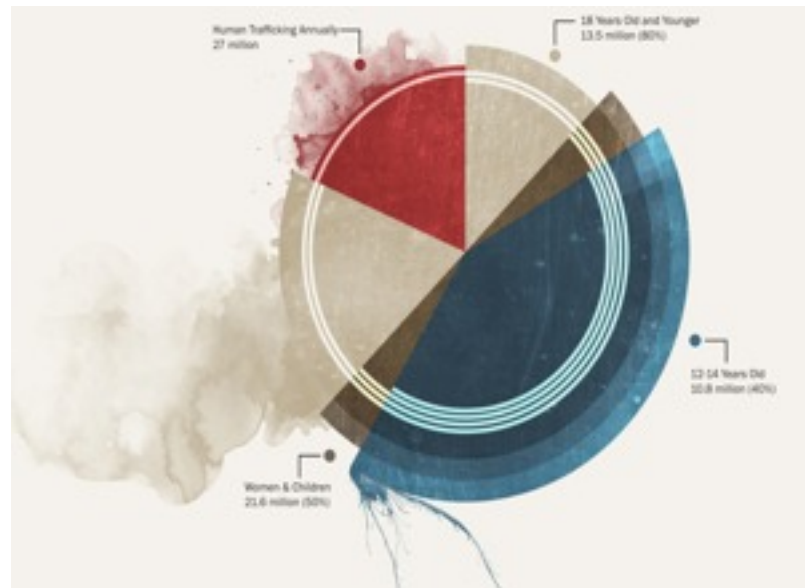
What is Human Trafficking?

As defined by Webster's dictionary, human trafficking is organized criminal activity in which human beings are treated as possessions to be controlled and exploited—as by being forced into prostitution or involuntary labor. It is the second largest growing criminal industry in the U.S., just behind drug trafficking.



Who is affected by it?

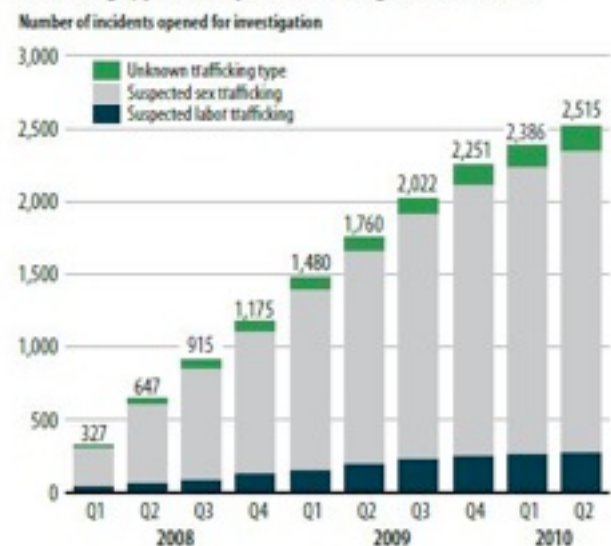
Men, women, and children are all affected by human trafficking. Men are usually wanted for their labor, while women and children are usually trafficked to be sexually exploited, however men, women, and children can endure both types of trafficking. Known as modern day slavery, 27 million people are currently enslaved by this crime. The chart below shows that out of the 27 million people that are trafficked a year, 80% of them are 18 years old or younger, half of them are women and children, and 40% are only between the ages of 12 and 14 years old.



Where is it taking place?

When most people think of human trafficking they usually assume it only happens overseas, however in today's society human trafficking is happening a lot closer to home than we think. An estimated 15,500–17,500 people trafficked into the United States per year, and of that, California, Nevada, Texas, and New York are the top destination states. To make it even more local, the FBI named Atlanta as one of the top 14 cities in the U.S. for sex trafficking. Approximately 100 adolescent females are sexually exploited each night in Georgia, usually exploited by an adult male on an average of three times per night.

FIGURE 1
 Cumulative number of incidents of human trafficking between January 2008 and June 2010, by suspected trafficking type and reported investigation start date



Overview

How Can We Fix the Problem?

In order to help find a solution to this problem, we must focus on three things: perception, prevention, and protection. People are not fully aware of the severity of this issue, especially in the United States. We must spread the word and help people broaden their awareness about human trafficking. The next step is to prevent the issue. Actions must be taken to prevent human trafficking from happening in the first place. And lastly, we must provide protection for victims of human trafficking.



To start this discussion, this guide poses three approaches:

- 1. Perception:** How we can change peoples views about human trafficking and spread the word about it.
- 2. Prevention:** Ways that we can get people involved in helping stop slavery and prevent girls from being taken.
- 3. Protection:** How we can help victims that escape and keep them out of harm.

Approach 1

Perception

Although over the past five years more people have become aware of human trafficking, there are still many, far too many, that are unaware of its presence in our homeland – in places as close to us as Atlanta. Approach one focuses on making teenagers, parents, communities, and our nation as a whole aware of the issue at hand.

Possible Actions

1. Include human trafficking in middle school health curriculum so children will be aware of the dangers at a younger age and so they can learn how to respond if they were ever put in a scary situation.
2. Have a community gathering with parents to make them more aware. The event should have a speaker, someone who has been through it and come out of it.
3. Put human trafficking in the media, commercials, radio, and magazines. Make sure it is censored for children, but get point across and focus on victims.

Potential Concerns and Trade-offs

- Educating people about human trafficking may take people out of their comfort zones. Attempts at educating the general populace may meet with some apathy or minor hostility because of that.
- Residents in some areas may dislike the negative attention brought upon their communities by bringing to public attention the human trafficking in those areas.
- Any of these actions have associated monetary costs associated with them, and will need fund raising of some sort, which itself can take time.
- There may be difficulty finding victims of human trafficking to speak out about it, due to social stigma, especially if they were to be featured in some sort of large advertising campaign.



What are the advantages of this approach?

What are the drawbacks of this approach?

How could we make it so parents are okay with their children learning about such an intense subject?

Approach 2

Prevention

Since human trafficking has recently been brought to many citizens attention, there are many actions we need to take to prevent girls being sold into slavery. There are many ways to prevent girls from being taken, they just need to be more aware of when they are in danger. Approach two focuses on making the community more involved and using more security to help prevent human trafficking.

Possible Actions

1. More community evolvment by having after school activities and raising money to help children with severe home problems to have outlets and support so they know they aren't alone.
2. Higher security in many dangerous places (truck stops, hotels, taxis) especially in the Atlanta Airport.
3. Place emergency buttons in bathrooms and Amber alerts in airports that go off immediately.
4. Have more police involvement and under cover cops in the porn and sex industry.

Potential Concerns and Trade-offs

- Financially either the government would have to help or people would have to do fund raisers or donate money.
- Higher security means that places like truck stops and hotels would have to hire more trained workers and this would cost the companies more money.
- Emergency buttons and alerts might scare people and cause more chaos than necessary if it where accidentally hit, so there needs to be a fine if the button is pushed as a joke or on accident.
- Having more undercover cops in the porn and sex industry could make it even more secretive and put the women in more danger, or it could put the undercover cops in harm.



What are the advantages of this approach?

What are the drawbacks of this approach?

Do you think emergency buttons would be a good or bad thing in airports?

Approach 3

Protection

In order to decrease human trafficking, we must first protect our victims and future generations the best way we can. Sex trafficking is a terrible situation for one to go through. We need to ensure that victims are kept out of harm's way and steered on the road to recovery. Every victim, whether immigrant or citizen, should be treated fairly and equally, because they were all taken advantage of by other people. Approach three focuses on options to get victims back on the right track, as well as protecting people in the future.

Possible Actions

1. Have more safe "homes" for victims to go to after leaving or escaping.
2. Some kind of therapy or counseling for victims affected; teaching them to fully function in society again. Also help them come off harsh drugs.
3. Get the government to raise funds to help women that have been brought to the USA illegally for sex, get a safe flight back once they are ready, if they want to go back.
4. More jail time for abductors, so that the victims feel safe knowing that their abductor is behind bars for a good while. This will also keep abductors off the streets, so other girls are protected.

Potential Concerns and Trade-offs

- Some women may reject help from therapy or the government. It should be a personal choice once they leave safe home but highly encouraged because victims have been through a lot of abuse and other terrible acts.
- Money is a big draw back because the funds for the government would have to come from taxes or donations.
- There might be an increase in immigration because victims from other countries that were brought here have the choice to go back or start a new life in the USA.
- More tax dollars would be used to hold all these criminals for longer periods of time.



What are the advantages of this approach?

What are the drawbacks of this approach?

Where do you think safe homes should be located? Why?

Take Time to Reflect...

In this forum, we have explored the issue of human trafficking that occurs in the United States along with three approaches to help prevent this issue from occurring, protect the victims who have been affected, and help promote awareness of this issue.

What new insight did you gain about this issue?

What approaches/topics were agreed upon collectively? What differences?

What else would you like to learn about human trafficking?



If we cannot do everything at once, which approach offers the best way to start?



Were there any approaches we did not discuss about?



What kind of effort should we expect on a personal level? Public level? Federal level?



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