



GEN-Z

TRAFFICKING AWARENESS
& ACTION GUIDE



ABOUT SOS

At SOS, we partner with communities and Local Care Networks to prevent trafficking and secure the lives of at-risk children. Our approach is guided by four core values – to see, engage, belong, and build. We see and engage with at-risk children, offering resources to communities and local partners, fostering a culture of belonging, and building sustainable solutions. We believe the best rescue happens before trafficking ever occurs.

INTRODUCTION

Human Trafficking is a serious and nuanced issue that endangers the life of at-risk children all over the world. In today's world, there is a lot of misinformation on the internet and social media. We have created a guide to equip you with the facts about human trafficking and empower you to take action to prevent trafficking.

This guide is for anyone who wants to learn about trafficking, but we made it specifically with Gen-Z in mind. As a generation with a passion for justice, we believe that Gen-Z has a unique role in the fight against trafficking. This guide is tailored to address some of the key issues that Gen-Z has encountered in their upbringing about Human Trafficking.

We understand human trafficking can be a difficult subject to talk about, so we applaud you for taking a step of boldness to tackle this tough subject.

To begin, please answer the questions below. These questions will evaluate your assumptions and knowledge about trafficking. After going through this guide, you can use these answers to help you gauge what misconceptions you may have had at the beginning.

- 1.What kinds of trafficking are you familiar with?
- 2.Who do traffickers target? What makes people vulnerable to traffickers?
- 3.Where do you find most of your information or facts about human trafficking?
- 4.Where do you think trafficking is most prevalent around the world?
- 5.What do you think you will be most surprised about hearing/learning?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

III

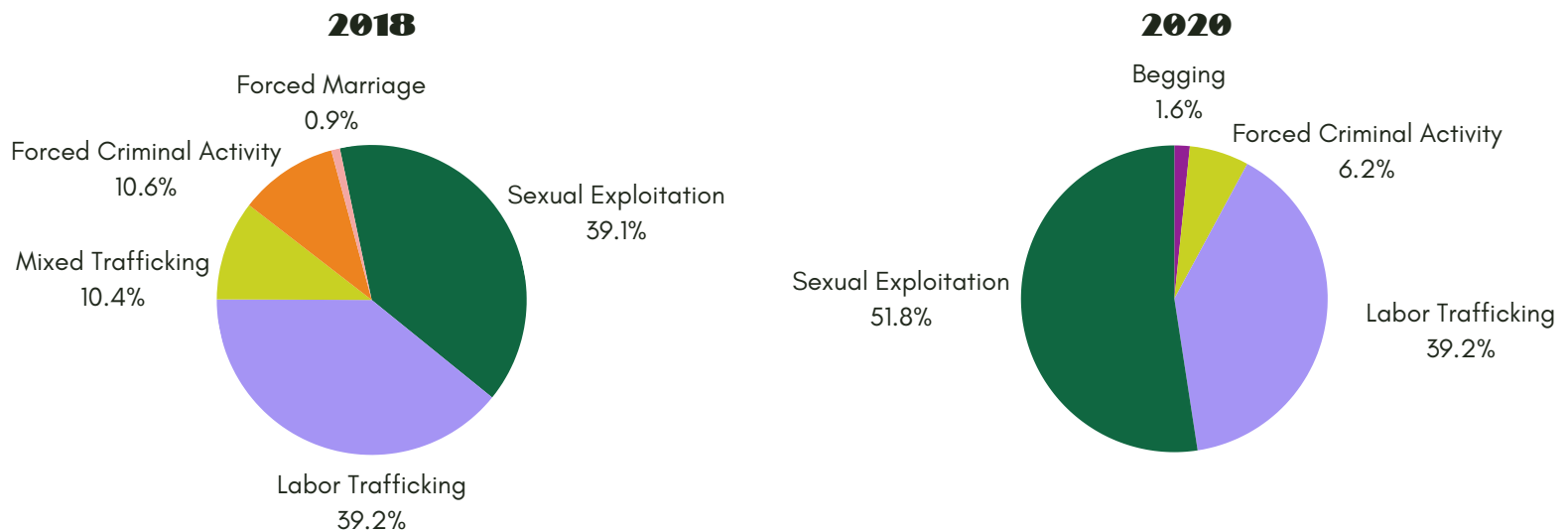
DEFINING HUMAN TRAFFICKING	01
HOW TRAFFICKING BEGINS	05
THE INTERNET AND TRAFFICKING	07
MYTHS & MISINFORMATION	10
WHAT YOU CAN DO	14
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	16



DEFINING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking, otherwise known as modern-day slavery, has almost 50 million victims globally. The industry profits about \$150 billion every year. Think about that for a second – the trafficking industry profits from exploitation, abuse, and criminal activity. People’s lives, well-being, and health suffer at the hands of those who use them for monetary gain. Traffickers coerce and force people into slavery, exploiting their basic needs such as food and water. They target the vulnerable and make false promises to provide these basic needs. Men, women, and children find themselves trapped, unable to escape this life they have been forced into. They have no autonomy, and traffickers aim to take away the voices of the victims. Trafficking can take on many forms, including sex trafficking, labor trafficking, debt bondage, forced marriage, and more. Sex trafficking is the most prevalent and pervasive form of trafficking, but all forms of trafficking are widespread.

FORMS OF EXPLOITATION ¹



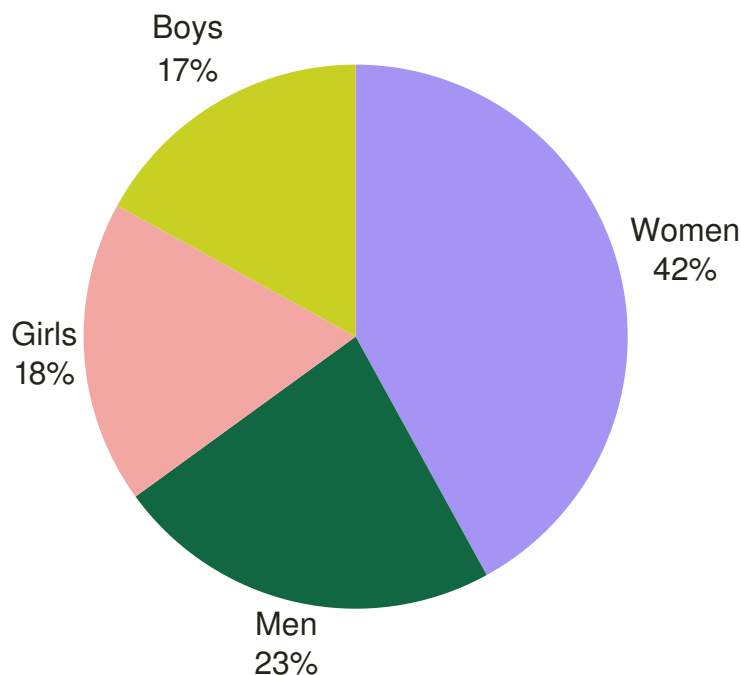
DEFINING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Sex trafficking was impacted in 2020 as pandemic restrictions caused bars, clubs, and even some brothels to shut down for a time. Many reports indicate that trafficking decreased because of this, but the statistics don't tell the entire story. The pandemic created more food and water insecurity, leading to more vulnerable people that traffickers took advantage of. Although some of the public places where exploitation happens closed, trafficking never took a break.

2

GENDERS OF DETECTED VICTIMS

Nearly one in every four trafficking victims is a child. Countless children become victims and are forced to perform labor or sex acts against their will. The majority of victims are comprised of women and girls. 60% of victims were women and girls, while men and boys comprise 40%.



FOOTNOTE: This range exists because statistics rely on case studies that observe small groups of people who represent the population at large.

DISCUSSION

1. Do you feel it is important to learn about human trafficking and find accurate facts and stats about it?
2. It is easy to look at these statistics and remain relatively detached from them. However, trafficking can happen to anyone, even a friend or a family member, if their environment is not secure. With this in mind, how does this impact or reframe your mindset about trafficking?
3. Have you ever considered the impact of the pandemic on human trafficking?
4. Why do you think so many children are targeted and trafficked?
5. What form of trafficking do you typically associate with the phrase "Human Trafficking"?
What types of trafficking were you previously aware of or did not know about?

DEFINITIONS

- Sex trafficking: the most prevalent type of trafficking in which people are forced or coerced to perform sex acts.
- Labor trafficking: a type of trafficking in which people are forced or coerced to work. Labor exploitation happens mainly through employers but can also happen through family members or intimate partners.
- Forced marriage: either one or both partners must marry against their will
- Debt bondage: traffickers exploit those who owe them a debt by forcing them to work in exchange for paying off the debt

THE RABBIT HOLE

Did you know that almost half of all child trafficking cases begin with familial involvement? Click below to watch “The Rabbit Hole” a short film depicting the reality of trafficking.

This short film depicts the intense nature of trafficking. Viewer Discretion is advised.



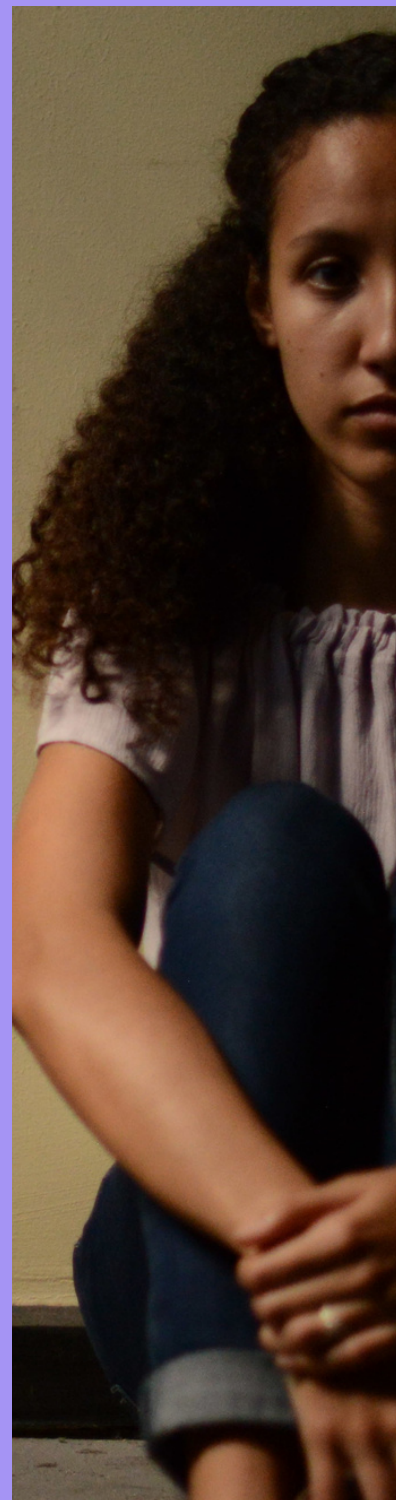
What are your thoughts or emotions after watching this short film? Take a moment to process.

Movies and social media often portray trafficking as adults kidnapping children out of a van or on the streets. Although this does happen, most victims are trafficked by someone they know: a friend, neighbor, family member, or an intimate partner. As you see in the film, these girls are being trafficked by a woman – perhaps a mother, aunt, or another relative. There are many reasons why people are trafficked by family members. Sometimes, they are trying to survive or make ends meet and feel they have no other option. This film shows a grim reality: that those who are the closest and seemingly most trustworthy can turn out to be the ones to exploit them. Adults can build trust and groom children or adolescents. Because of this shared trust, the victim will be more likely to listen and do whatever the trafficker wants from them.

COMMON RISK FACTORS

Below are just a few of the common factors that put people at risk of being trafficked:

- Lack of access to food and water (economic need)
- Abusive or dysfunctional home life
- Those who have run away from home and/or homeless
- Addiction in the home
- Immigration status
- Foster care
- Lack of education
- Wars and conflict



UNODC resource: https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2022/GLOTiP_2022_web.pdf

DISCUSSION

1. Did you notice any similarities or differences between the risk factors you listed and the ones mentioned above? Were you on the right track?
2. With the mentioned risk factors in mind, can you think of people in your community who may be at risk to trafficking? If so, how can you help them and look out for them?
3. How does learning about these risk factors inform the way you view people who lack basic needs such as food and water?

DEFINITIONS⁸

- **Grooming:** the process of a trafficker gaining someone's trust and manipulating them for the purpose of exploiting and using them.
- **At-risk:** a term used to describe someone who is more vulnerable to the effects of trafficking because of their circumstances, such as a lack of access to water, food, shelter, and much more.

THE INTERNET & TRAFFICKING

The Internet has shaped the world we know today in so many ways. Similar to how the internet has impacted cultures around the world, the internet has had its own impact on the world of trafficking. Traffickers have adapted their recruitment methods to utilize the Internet, using it to expand their reach to find victims while reducing their risk of being caught by authorities. In the United States, nearly 40% of sex trafficking victims are recruited online.⁹ In 2020, there was a 125% increase in reports of recruitment into trafficking through Facebook and a 95% increase in reports of recruitment on Instagram compared to the previous year. Social media profiles can provide insight and information that traffickers can leverage. Traffickers can pose as caring strangers to build trust with someone who appears to be lonely. Or, a trafficker can offer a job to someone trying to find work and seems desperate and likely to take a chance on a job that seems too good to be true. Traffickers can do this by using fake identities or participating in places like online chat rooms where anonymity is normal. The internet and social media are being leveraged by traffickers in many different ways, but there are two broad tactics that are most commonly used.

TACTICS USED ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Traffickers utilize two main tactics for online recruitment: fishing and hunting. Fishing generally looks like posted advertisements for job opportunities. Fishing is a setup where victims are enticed to reach out to the traffickers, which is low-risk for the trafficker. The Hunting tactic is used by traffickers to actively seek out victims and initiate a conversation through chat rooms, social media, or dating apps. They choose their victims using the information posted on their accounts, aiming to target those who display economic or emotional needs. For these reasons, caution and awareness are needed when navigating social media.

THE IMPACT OF PORNOGRAPHY

The internet has made pornography more accessible than ever before. The pornography industry is massive, generating billions of dollars each year. A significant part of the growth of the pornography industry is its ties with human trafficking. Some agencies profit from creating underage content or exploitation of the actors, coercing or forcing them to perform sex acts they do not consent to. Traffickers offer fake job opportunities, and victims may find themselves exploited in the pornography industry. Pornography is one of the main avenues for sex trafficking, and with little regulation within the industry, trafficking continues to thrive within the pornography industry.

Another impact of pornography is how it normalizes physical, verbal, and sexual violence. Studies have shown that up to 88% of pornographic video contains acts of sexual violence. 95% of the time, the subject of that sexual violence is a woman. Watching this content can shape the minds of consumers, skewing their understanding of healthy sex. This can impact not only intimate partners but it encourage acts of sexual violence towards victims of trafficking caught in prostitution. While it's impossible to know how many people are trafficking victims, survivor stories and research tells us that trafficking has become more prevalent in the porn industry. Pornography and trafficking are inseparable, and one industry impacts the other.

Ultimately, the growth of pornography and its effect on the minds of consumers has resulted in a demand for the exploitation of people. Before the internet, the pornography industry's profit primarily relied on people buying tickets to pornographic films or purchasing magazines; later, it benefited from the introduction of pay-per-view video and adult video stores. You needed an ID showing you were older than 18 to get a hold of pornographic material. Today, profit and demand are driven through clicks and views. Although paid subscriptions to pornographic sites are a substantial source of revenue, a mass amount of free content helps the industry thrive. Through sites that utilize a video-sharing platform, videos can be uploaded by anyone and watched by anyone for free. Clicks and views create revenue, resulting in demand for more content – meaning more people to traffic.

DISCUSSION

1. How can you better steward your information on social media? What are some habits people can develop to stay away from potential traffickers?
2. Do you think that culture has an impact on views about sexual exploitation?
3. What are your personal views on pornography? Do you think it has an impact on sex trafficking?
4. Why do you think traffickers continue to use social media as a primary recruitment method?

To read more on these topics, check out these resources :

- [The Internet and Human Trafficking](#)
- [Pornography & It's Impact on Sexual Exploitation](#)
- [Online Safety Tips](#)

NAVIGATING MISINFORMATION

Human Trafficking is a widely talked about topic. Because of this, we are seeing a rise in misinformation that causes already unseen victims to remain invisible. They are being hidden behind additional layers of politics, debate, and sensationalism. Human Trafficking is a very real, global problem hurting at-risk communities. This is why SOS is committed to our 4 areas of impact:

Food, Water, Rescue and Community Development. We recognize that without addressing all 4 areas, the vulnerabilities that fuel the supply of girls being trafficked will continue.

Trafficking looks different all over the world, and our team must be equipped to navigate misinformation and politics as we seek to help those who are affected by trafficking. With this in mind, we want to arm you with some questions and strategies to use when you encounter new situations.

Our approach to navigating misinformation and sensationalism centers around our victim-centric, trauma-informed approach to care. Whether it be rumors of Wayfair selling girls in containers, zip ties on a door handle as a sign of impending doom or a politically spun event, good questions will help you navigate the world of misinformation.

1. WHAT ARE THE FACTS?

Start with Google. Plug in whatever information or news you have and start looking at the sources of information that come up. If it is in fact a real issue you will tend to find many respectable sources of information offering similar facts. We search for a healthy balance of law enforcement, news outlets on both the right and left side of politics as well as NGOs speaking about it.

If it's a topic related to trafficking (Like CSEC or Grooming) look for subject matter experts. A few of our trusted sources are Polaris, the State Department's TIP (trafficking in persons) report, The UNODC, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the Alliance for Freedom, Restoration and Justice (AFRJ), and Love 146.

If it's a case of suspected local trafficking, reach out to the National Human Trafficking Hotline. Additionally, most local police departments have a Human Trafficking Task Force that you reach on the non-emergency line, and they are a GREAT RESOURCE!

MYTHS & MISINFORMATION

2. WHAT DOES THE SURVIVOR SAY?

Is there a voice present from the population affected?

Once you validate the facts, look for the voice of the survivor. We want to cut through the commentary to hear what the person directly affected has to say. From there you can navigate questions about the political nature of the issue. It helps to look at both the right and the left to see what similarities and differences you find. For us, we then apply a victim-centric approach that asks questions about how we can best help those affected. If you haven't looked into trauma-informed, victim-centric approaches it is a good thing to educate yourself about, as we believe it's an important component of care.

3. IS THIS A TRUSTED ORGANIZATION?

As you work to navigate the world of anti-human trafficking organizations you will also find that they don't always make as much information available online. While this can make people wary, it is because of the need for organizations to protect their staff, survivors, and people in their programs.

Here are some insider tips on what we look for: find their most recent 990s and Annual Reports to see how they spend funds. Look for independent audits and accreditation seals and look at the information they are putting out about their projects. We want to see reassuring information that doesn't compromise the safety of the girls in the program or disclose too much information about sensitive locations. We get just as nervous if we find too much info online as if we find too little.

These three questions form the foundation of a filter that allows you to navigate misinformation. It takes time for academic papers, research, and legal cases to bring about reforms and publish statistics. Over time, we work to validate findings and support those findings with outside research and best practices. It is also very helpful to remember that all rescues must be done in tandem with law enforcement. If we encounter news of a rescue separate from local law enforcement, it raises many alarm bells. If a rescue attempt is made without proper law enforcement and government departments (CPS, Women and Child Welfare...) then the person rescuing could be liable of trafficking.

FACT VS. FICTION

Conspiracy theories are not the only misleading type of information. Misinformation can also be harmful, as it can create false ideas about trafficking. This is why it is important to distinguish fact from fiction about popular theories about human trafficking.

FICTION	FACT
Underdeveloped countries are the only places trafficking happens.	Trafficking happens everywhere around the world.
Most perpetrators in America are immigrants.	Traffickers can be documented or undocumented citizens. However, more often than not, trafficking is a domestic crime.
Recruiting victims mainly happens through kidnapping.	Recruitment happens through social media, grooming, etc. Kidnapping is involved in less than 10% of trafficking incidents.

DISCUSSION

1. Is there any information you have difficulty accepting? Did you notice any biases that may be present in your views?
2. How does misinformation affect trafficking victims? Have you or someone you know been directly affected by misinformation?
3. Have you heard of any of these conspiracy theories? If so, what would your response be to those who believe these theories?
4. How does this affect your perception of trafficking going forward?



WHAT YOU CAN DO

STEWARD YOUR INFLUENCE

Call 1 (888) 373-7888 or text "HELP" or "INFO" to 233733. Call or text these numbers if you see evidence of someone being trafficked. Keep these numbers saved in your phone so you can quickly access them when needed. If you do not live in America, check your local emergency and trafficking hotlines.

STEWARD YOUR EYES

What does it mean to steward your eyes? It means to think about the impact of what you are watching. Do you watch onlyfans? Are you watching videos on pornography sites? Consider the impact of your participation.

STEWARD YOUR HANDS & HEART: VOLUNTEER

Volunteering gives you a chance to help at-risk children and families up close. You can partner with your community to provide food, water, and support to those who experience economic need. You can also be a part of programs that offer job training or teach life skills to teens. Through volunteering, you make a real difference as you form relationships with the people in your community and show them that you care. Moreover, volunteering helps to prevent trafficking in the first place as it decreases the risk of vulnerable children becoming victims. There are many opportunities everywhere with various nonprofits and organizations, so it is an easy way to start getting involved.

We would love to partner with you if you live in the DFW area! We work with Local Care Networks to sustain real change in local communities and have numerous volunteer opportunities. Here is a link to check out how to become a community outreach volunteer:

- <https://app.vomo.org/org/sos-international-community-outreach>.

BECOME AN SOS BRAND INFLUENCER

Social media is widespread and reaches many demographics, it is the perfect tool to spread awareness. You can use your social media platform to bring attention to the importance of trafficking prevention. Being a brand influencer starts with understanding the vision and heart behind SOS. Being an influencer involves posting content about SOS regularly and sharing what we do as an organization.

MENTOR AT-RISK CHILDREN

At-risk children suffer more in school because their basic needs are not being met. They lack the resources to succeed in an educational environment. Mentoring is one way they can grow mentally and emotionally. In fact, "after an average of 10 months of mentoring, mentored youth fared better than those without mentors in emotional/psychological well-being, social relationships, academic attitudes, and self reported grades." Look for a mentoring program in your community. Through mentoring, you can encourage and help these children reach their potential. This sets them on a path for success and better relationships in the future.

If you live in the DFW area, we would love you to join the Champion Mentorship Program here at SOS! Here is the link to join and sign up for the program:

- <https://app.vomo.org/opportunity/championsmentorprogram>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES/SOURCES

1. [Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020.](#)
2. [Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2022](#)
3. [Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage](#)
4. [Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage](#)
5. [Counter-trafficking Data Brief - CTDC](#)
6. [Myths, Facts, and Statistics - Polaris](#)
7. [Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2022](#)
8. [ibid.](#)
9. [What We Know About How Child Sex Trafficking Happens - Polaris](#)
10. [Analysis of 2020 National Human Trafficking Hotline Data - Polaris](#)
11. [Countering QAnon | Polaris Project](#)
12. [Human Trafficking Data Collection Activities, 2022 | Bureau of Justice Statistics](#)
13. [Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2022](#)
14. [The Mentoring Effect: Young People's Perspectives on the Outcomes and Availability of](#)

