

Human Sex Trafficking Statistics

Notes: Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and Vanderbilt Center for Community Studies: Research Study (2011)

Definitions:

Human Sex Trafficking

- Involves the slavery of children and women forced to perform sex acts for money at various locations across the state for the purpose of making money for their captors.
- A for-profit sex act is induced by forces, fraud, or coercion OR in which the person performing such an act is under the age of 18 years old.

Basic HST Statistics

- 1 in 4 children who run away from home are approached for commercial sexual exploitation within 48 hours of running away
- Average child who is victimized: 13 years old
- Every 2 minutes a child is trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation in the United States
- 27 million people are enslaved today
- 800,000 people trafficked across borders annually
- 1.2 million children are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation
- 200,000-300,000 children who are at risk of being exploited for sex commercially per year
- Juveniles who are trafficked their age alone make them victims regardless of the use of force or coercion
- Average amount of years enslaved is 4-5
- Girls averagely enter prostitution at the age between 12 and 14, and boys enter even younger

General Statistics:

According to the U.S. Department of Justice human trafficking is the second fastest growing criminal industry — just behind drug trafficking.

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center estimates it's a \$32 billion industry.

HST Specific to TN

- Trafficking knows no community, border, or country.
- Many victims are moved to Tennessee because of its geographical relation to Atlanta, which is a major trafficking hub.
- Victims are typically given to the client at big events, such as entertainment or sports. These visitors are referred to as 'sex tourists'
- Most victims do not come forwards for help because they are either drugged, threatened, brainwashed, and beaten into believing authorities will abuse them worse than their captors.
- Cases against the traffickers are difficult for police to investigate and prosecute because many times victims are arrested for crimes they were forced to commit.

- In TN, sex slavery and trafficking are more common than most people would presume.
- In order to make changes: TN law needs to mandate heavier sentences on traffickers and those who inflict sex slavery on children.
- When there's no one there by choice to suffice the demand, supply is made and people are trafficked to fill the gaps.
- TBI uncovered that 29 individuals were afflicted with Somali gangs in the middle of TN. They were arrested for trafficking girls as young as 12.
- July 2010: A man in East TN was arrested for trafficking over 400 girls.
- One of the main reasons sex trafficking continues to increase is: HST produces more money than trafficking drugs, and is less risky.
- Coercion is a powerful tool for traffickers. It is referred to as, a "grooming process" that includes both rewards and punishment.