



MCHB/OWH May 2005 Webcast  
May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2005



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**Look Beneath the Surface**  
*Rescue & Restore Victims of  
Human Trafficking*

U.S. Department  
of Health and Human Services



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**Human Trafficking**  
**- The Crime -**

- Modern-day slavery
- Traffickers use force, fraud or coercion
- Second largest criminal industry
- Fastest growing



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## Human Trafficking - The Victims -

- 600,000 – 800,000 trafficked internationally
- U.S. victims – 14,500 – 17,500 annually
  - Former Soviet Union
  - Southeast Asia
  - Latin America
  - Other developing countries
- Ubiquitous across the country





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## Human Trafficking - The Crime -

- Sex trafficking
- Labor trafficking





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## Sex Trafficking

- Any commercial sex of children (persons under the age of 18) or
- Commercial sexual exploitation of an adult by means of force, fraud, coercion
- Examples: prostitution, pornography, exotic dancing/stripping, massage, escort
- Canadian study: \$250,000 value of victim





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## Labor Trafficking

- Labor exploitation by means of force, fraud, coercion
- Examples: migrant farm labor, sweat shops, domestic servitude, service industries



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**Half** of  
trafficking  
victims globally  
are **children**



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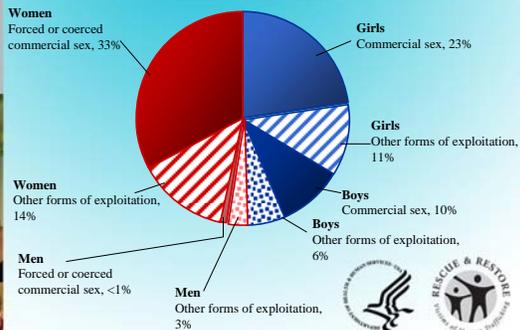
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## Human Trafficking - The Victims -



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## Victim Recruitment - The Promises -

- Earn money to support family at home
- Work in entertainment industry
- Receive high-quality U.S. education
- Get adopted or married





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## Victim Enslavement - The Methods -

- Instill fear  
*“Victims paralyzed with fear”*
- Threats
- Isolate
- Debt bondage
- Confiscate documents
- Control victim’s money





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## Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000

- Trafficking given a name
- Made a major federal crime
- First recognition of psychological coercion
- Premise: Victims helped to rebuild their lives in the U.S.
- “T” visa
- HHS Certification
- National network of service providers/Unaccompanied Refugee Minor program





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**Identifying Victims  
- Look Beneath the Surface -**

- Trafficking largely hidden social problem
- Many victims in plain sight
- Not unlike domestic violence/child abuse
- The case in Long island






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**Identifying Victims  
- Look Beneath the Surface -**

- Accompanied by controlling person
- Signs of physical abuse
- Overly submissive, fearful
- Does not speak English
- No identification






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***Rescue & Restore Victims of  
Human Trafficking***

**“Look Beneath the Surface”**






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## Resource Materials

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## Rescue & Restore Web Site [www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking)

More than 85,000 visitors

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## Rescue & Restore Hotline - The 24/7 Resource -

**1-888-3737-888**

- More than 2,100 calls
- Most calls received from:
  - California (228)
  - New York (176)
  - Florida (155)
  - Texas (129)
  - Georgia (111)
- 20 percent referrals

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***Rescue & Restore***  
**- Assisting Victims -**

- HHS grantee victim support network
  - Located throughout country
  - Activated by call to hotline
  - Provide case management
  - Assist with benefit eligibility paperwork
  - Advocate on behalf of victims






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***Rescue & Restore***  
**- Assisting Victims -**

- HHS certified 737 victims since Oct. 2000
- 126 victims certified thus far in FY 2005
- 70 minors






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**Getting Help for Victims**  
**- Your Role -**

- Call **Trafficking Information and Referral Hotline:**  
**1.888.3737.888**
- Hotline will help you:
  - Determine if you have encountered trafficking victim
  - Identify local community resources to help victims

***Call 911 if victim at risk of imminent harm***






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**What can medical professionals do to combat trafficking?**

**- Help Find Victims -**

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**Missed Opportunities**

Increasing Awareness in Identifying Victims of Human Trafficking in Healthcare Settings

Cherie Sammis, RN MS FNP  
Providence Hospital, Washington, DC

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**Identifying Victims**

- Victims are predominantly women and children in forced labor, debt bondage, and sexual exploitation
- More vulnerable and fall prey to the lure of false pretenses of improved living conditions, education, financial security, etc.

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**Have We Missed Opportunities?**

- Why are we missing victims trafficked into US?
  - We see them in ER and urgent care centers
  - We see them in the safety net
  - They are a commodity to traffickers
    - They seek health care
- Why are they hard to identify?
- Why are they hard to reach?

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## Victim Identification

- Clinical symptoms and health effects are broad spectrum
- Varies just as the profile of victim varies
- The challenge is more intense than screening for Domestic Violence
  - Like DV, it may cross all ethnic, cultural, and racial boundaries
  - Immigrant women may suffer higher rates of battering

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## Challenges

- Cultural and Language Barriers
  - New immigrants are not acculturated to American norms
  - What we may consider to be a violation of human rights may be acceptable in their country/culture
- Victim Feelings of Hopelessness
  - Believe they do not have the same protections offered by the US legal systems
  - Basic distrust of our legal system from corruption in their native country
  - Trafficker's threats of harm to their families
  - Fear of Deportation

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## Challenges

- Parallels the cycle of abuse model
  - Inability to "break the chain"
- Victims may exhibit strong attachment/protective behaviors towards the traffickers-
  - Defense coping mechanism in response to fear and extreme stress
  - Through fear, intimidation, coercion, they protect the trafficker
  - Power perpetuates the relationship of dependency
  - They are victims of crime but believe they are guilty

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## Clinical Symptoms and Health Effects

- Malnourished
- Poor Oral Health
- Delayed or fragmented immunization in children and adolescents
- Positive PPD/evidence of TB
- Old scars
- Poorly healed wounds and old fractures (evidence of unset and misaligned)
- Chronic Pain/ Chronic Headaches
- Suspicion of Domestic Violence
- Chronic Anemia
- Evidence of disease states from other underdeveloped countries (parasites, fungal infections, etc.)
- Multiple STD's-GC, Chlamydia, HIV, Hepatitis B and C

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## Clinical Symptoms and Health Effects

- Unplanned Pregnancies
- Past Forced Abortion with Resultant Scarring
- Higher rates of Ectopic Pregnancies from STD's
- Varied Health Providers, No Medical Home
- Frequent Flyers to the ER with multiple and varied caregiver "in charge"
- If Pregnant:
  - No Prenatal Care
  - Missed Appointments
  - Poor Weight Gain
  - Low Birth Weight, IUGR
  - Preterm Labor
  - History of Miscarriage

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## Victim Psychological Effects

- PTSD
- Poor Self Esteem
- Depression
- Flat Affect
- Anxiety Disorders
- Sleep Disorders
- Eating Disorders/ Bulimia
- Drug and Alcohol use to desensitize sense of entrapment
- Inappropriate Aggression in Youth
- Inappropriate bonding of child/youth with adult

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## Clinical Symptoms and Health Effects

- The Challenge for Healthcare Providers in all settings:
  - Identical health conditions for those who are impoverished, vulnerable, uninsured and underinsured for US and immigrant populations

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## What Do You Do?

- Raise Your Index of Suspicion
- Think like DV, but take it down to the next level-
  - "Look Beneath the Surface"
- Think **YIMBY**
  - Yes, It's In My Backyard
- Patients may come from:
  - Rich and poor neighborhoods
  - Domestic help in homes, service employees in restaurants
  - Adolescents on street corners, homeless, teen prostitutes

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## What Do You Do?

- Use the provider-patient interaction to build a relationship
  - A Kind Word
  - Time Behind a Closed Door
  - Build Trust while treating the healthcare issue
- **LOOK, LISTEN, and FEEL**
  - "The eyes are the windows to the soul"

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## Screening Questions

- \* Why and how did you get to this country?
- \* Where do you eat and sleep?
- \* How did you get here today?
- Where do you live?
- Can you leave your job if you want?
- Are you paying off a debt?
- Is anyone forcing you to do anything you do not want to do?
- Have your "papers" been taken away from you?

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## What Do You Do?

- If you encounter a Victim
  - Safety as priority is your PRIMARY goal
  - Provide information in native language and include **safe shelter**, social supports, legal, and health access
  - As in DV victims-Do No Harm
    - Do not Re-traumatize
    - Don't manage this alone
  - As in child abuse victims-
    - Use specialists trained in child and youth
- **Trafficking Information and Referral Hotline**
  - 1-888-373-7888

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## Missed Opportunities

- Little Hope
  - 9 yr old Haitian girl from Pembroke Pines, Florida
- Marta
  - Pregnant Guatemalan 17 year old

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### Recommendations for Administrators

- Training
  - Integrate with annual DV and Cultural Competency
    - Include all levels of staff: non-clinical, housekeeping, van driver
    - Add trafficking questions to standard DV Form
  - Provider training on basics of bio-psycho-socio aspects of victim abuse and torture
    - Lessons Learned: Include sensitivity towards the healthcare provider

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### Recommendations for Administrators

- Have literature, posters, tent cards in bathrooms, pharmacy, lab, waiting areas, WIC office, dental suites
- Understand migrant worker seasons/travel corridors into your community
- Dialogue with Federal and Local Law Enforcement

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### Recommendations for Administrators

- Sponsor collaborative forums with NGO's, school reps, youth organizations, faith-based settings, hospitals and hospital associations, local medical society and nursing organizations, etc.
- Reduce Barriers Between Social, Medical, and Legal Providers

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## Talk About It, Anywhere, Anytime

- "The heart of the matter is society's failure to identify victims, and at the heart of THAT is the average person's lack of knowledge and vigilance"

• Sr. Mary Ellen Dougherty

*Health Progress* sept/Oct 2004 Issue

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