

Human Trafficking The Basic Definitions



Human Trafficking is modern day slavery. Victims of human trafficking are used for sexual, labor, and other forms of exploitation by means of force, fraud, or coercion. Victims include men, women, and children of every race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, nationality, and religion. Elements of sex and labor trafficking often overlap. Human Trafficking occurs in all states in both rural and urban areas.

Labor Trafficking: The recruitment, harboring, transportation, or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery.¹

Sex Trafficking: The recruitment, harboring, transportation, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, in which such an act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person forced to perform such an act is under the age of 18. ¹

Smuggling involves illegal crossing of a country's border with the consent of the person being transported. While the smuggling is illegal, these individuals are traveling voluntarily and are free upon arrival. Trafficking is based on the exploitation of an individual and does not require any type of movement across borders or within a country. Trafficked persons are being used against their will.

Trauma-Informed Care is a treatment framework for survivors that involves recognizing, understanding, and treating all types of trauma with emphasis on the physical, psychological, and physical safety of survivors to encourage empowerment and rebuild a sense of self-determination.²

Fraud: False representation of a matter or situation that is intended to deceive an individual so that he or she makes unknowingly makes a decision(s) that will cause them harm.

Coercion: The use of intimidation to compel an individual to act against his or her will by the use of physical force, psychological pressure, or threats of harm to the individual or loved ones.

[1] Office on Trafficking in Persons: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/resource/fshumantrafficking>

[2] Definition from Trauma Informed Care Project