



Essential Knowledge for All Caring Human Beings on Human Trafficking

- Human trafficking is a **crime of exploitation, not kidnapping**, and it often occurs through manipulation, coercion, and abuse of trust rather than force or chains. [\[fbi.gov\]](#), [\[un.org\]](#)
- Trafficking can happen **anywhere—homes, schools, workplaces, online spaces, hotels, hospitals, and communities—and affects people of all ages, genders, races, and nationalities**. [\[fbi.gov\]](#), [\[state.gov\]](#)
- Traffickers frequently **target vulnerability**, including poverty, loneliness, homelessness, disability, addiction, migration stress, or a desire for love, safety, or opportunity. [\[justice.gov\]](#), [\[un.org\]](#)
- Most victims **do not self-identify or ask for help**, often due to fear, shame, trauma bonding, language barriers, or threats to themselves or their families. [\[fbi.gov\]](#), [\[justice.gov\]](#)
- **Any minor involved in commercial sex is legally a trafficking victim**, regardless of consent, gifts, emotions, or relationship labels. [\[fbi.gov\]](#), [\[state.gov\]](#)
- Warning signs may include **controlled communication, lack of freedom, fearfulness, inconsistent stories, untreated medical needs, or someone else speaking or deciding for them**. [\[justice.gov\]](#), [\[fbi.gov\]](#)
- Trafficking often involves **psychological control**, including lies, debt, emotional dependence, threats, or promises of love, work, housing, or protection. [\[fbi.gov\]](#), [\[un.org\]](#)
- Technology plays a major role, with traffickers using **social media, messaging apps, online ads, and digital payments** to recruit and exploit victims. [\[state.gov\]](#), [\[un.org\]](#)
- **No single indicator proves trafficking**, and context, patterns, and power dynamics matter more than checklists. [\[fbi.gov\]](#), [\[justice.gov\]](#)
- Ordinary people can reduce harm by **not judging, not interrogating, and not confronting suspected traffickers**, which can increase danger. [\[justice.gov\]](#), [\[un.org\]](#)
- Reporting concerns—even when unsure—through **proper channels or trained organizations** can interrupt exploitation and save lives. [\[fbi.gov\]](#), [\[state.gov\]](#)
- Prevention is strongest when communities **promote dignity, connection, economic stability, healthy relationships, and care for the most vulnerable**. [\[un.org\]](#), [\[state.gov\]](#)
- For immediate danger call **911**, and to report tips you can call the HSI Tip Line at **1-866-347-2423**. [\[dhs.gov\]](#)

- To get help or share concerns, contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline at **1-888-373-7888** or text “**BEFREE/HELP**” to **233733** (24/7, confidential support).
[humantraffickinghotline.org], [dhs.gov]

Blink3 is the **Universal nonverbal SOS** for victims of human trafficking and abuse, blinking 3 times is a way to ask for help. Please see <https://blink3.org/> for more information, and free courses