

What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is modern day slavery.

Human trafficking (also called trafficking in persons or TIP) is the recruitment, transportation, harbouring or receipt of human beings by means of fraud, force, or coercion for the purpose of sexual or labour exploitation.

After drug dealing, human trafficking ties with illegal arms dealing as the second largest criminal industry in the world today, and it is the fastest growing.

Who are the victims of human trafficking?

Victims of human trafficking are women and girls, young children, teenagers, men and women.

It is estimated that: approximately 900,000 people are trafficked annually worldwide, 80% of them women and girls.

How do people become victims of human trafficking?

A person can become a victim of human trafficking by being –

- promised a good job
- promised education
- promised marriage
- sold by parents, husbands, boyfriends
- abducted by traffickers

Traffickers identify vulnerable people and make offers to them that seem like the answer to their problems.

Why are people vulnerable to becoming victims of human trafficking?

People are vulnerable to human trafficking for a number of reasons, including:

- poverty
- unemployment
- lack of education and professional opportunities
- family problems
- the desire for a better life

What happens to victims of human trafficking?

Traffickers exploit victims for –

- commercial sex – prostitution, stripping, pornography, live-sex shows
- forced labour – as domestic, sweatshop factory, mine, restaurant, forestry and farm workers

Traffickers keep victims under control in many ways including -

- beating, starving and raping them
- isolating them by keeping them locked up and not allowing any outside contact
- taking away their ID cards, passports and other documents
- subjecting them to debt bondage (making them work to repay a debt they are told they owe for travelling and living expenses)
- forcing them to take illegal drugs
- threatening them and their families with injury and death
- threatening to shame them by telling their families and friends what they are doing

Who are human traffickers?

Human traffickers may be:

- part of organised local, national or international criminal groups
- individual freelancers

Traffickers are not always strangers.

People are often 'trafficked' by someone they know:

- a relative
- a neighbour
- a friend or acquaintance

What is being done to combat human trafficking?

Human trafficking is a serious criminal offence.

Under the 2004 Combating of Trafficking in

Persons Act -

- all forms of human trafficking are prohibited
- traffickers can be imprisoned for 3 years to life
- traffickers' property can be forfeited
- victims can receive full restitution
- victims can receive protection and help to return home

In order to prevent and stop human trafficking -

- The police are prosecuting traffickers
- The Government, Help & Shelter and other NGOs are
 - warning people about human trafficking
 - protecting and supporting victims
 - encouraging people to report human trafficking

What can you do?

To not become a victim

If you are promised a good job, education or marriage away from your home -

- ask questions and check the answers given
- do not sign anything before you understand what it says
- get help and advice from someone you trust
- make sure your family and friends have the name, address and phone number of where you are going
- keep in contact with a relative or friend at home
- keep a copy of your passport/ID card in a safe place where only you can find it
- if you go abroad, register with the Guyana embassy or high commission

Be smart, be safe.

If an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

To play your part in combating human trafficking

People you see every day may be victims of trafficking. Look for clues.

If a person -

- doesn't speak English, and/or
- looks frightened, ill, drugged, or depressed, and/or
- is working somewhere with heavy security or restricted access, and/or
- has no form of identification, and/or
- is working as a prostitute, or in a strip or lap-dancing club

- ask questions. You may be the only outsider with a chance to speak with a victim.

If you know someone who may be a victim of human trafficking, or if you want to know more about human trafficking, please contact:

Help & Shelter

Homestretch Avenue, Georgetown
Telephone: 227 3454, 225 4731, 227 8353
Email: hands@networksgy.com

Ministry of Human Services & Social Security

Lot 1 Water & Cornhill Streets, Georgetown
Telephone: 227 4082, 227 4083
Email: counter_tip@yahoo.com

Any police station

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Homestretch Avenue
Georgetown

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Email: hands@networksgy.com

Website: <http://www.sdn.org.gy/hands>

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WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

