



Human Trafficking in South Florida

Regina Bernadin & Florencia Dominguez

International Rescue Committee (IRC)

- The International Rescue Committee responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises and helps people to survive and rebuild their lives
- Founded in 1933 at the request of Albert Einstein, the IRC offers lifesaving care and life-changing assistance to vulnerable populations

IRC's Anti-trafficking Program

- IRC has been assisting human trafficking victims throughout South Florida since January 2003. Since its inception, the program has served over 360 victims in the region
- It provides safe and appropriate housing, case management, medical services, legal assistance, and clinical intervention to survivors, as well as educational seminars to the community on human trafficking

Scope of the Problem

- Top Destination States: Florida, Texas, New York, and California
- Every year up to 300,000 U.S. citizen minors are at risk of being trafficked within U.S borders
- In the U.S.: 14,500-17,500 foreigners are trafficked annually into the country, 80% are women and children

Scope of the Problem (continued)

- 21.9 million people in slavery around the world
- More people enslaved today than during the transcontinental slave trade
- Globally, only 40 thousand victims were identified last year
- Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report provides global rankings for 188 countries

The Law

International level:

- Palermo Protocol of 2000
 - Prevent, suppress, and punish Trafficking in persons, especially women and children

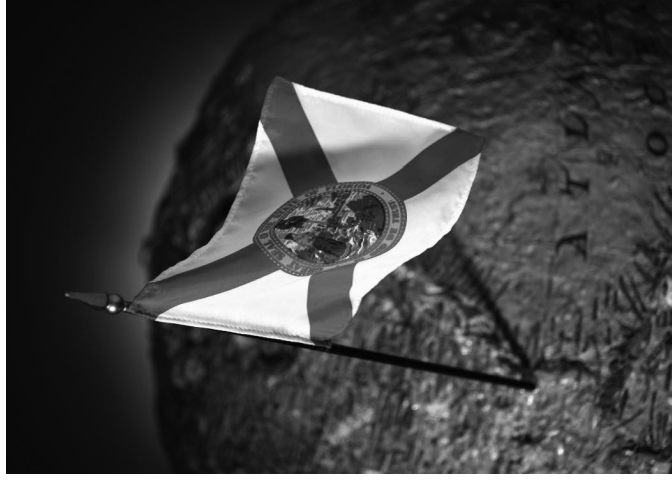
National level:

- Victims of Trafficking and Protections Act of 2000 (TVPA)
 - Reauthorized and amended 4 times

The Law (continued)

Local level:

- All 50 states have specific laws against human trafficking
 - Florida: Statute 787.06



International: Palermo Protocol

- Adopted by the United Nations in 2000
- More than 150 countries have become parties to the protocol
- More than 140 countries have criminalized trafficking
- Includes organ trafficking and illegal adoption

National: TVPA of 2000

Sex trafficking: the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, in which the *commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion. or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age;

* the term “commercial sex act” means any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person.

National: TVPA of 2000 (continued)

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

Trafficking Vs. Smuggling

Trafficking is exploitation-based

- Non-consensual
- Person does not need to travel anywhere
- Exploitation occurs indefinitely

Smuggling is transportation-based

- Agree to be transported
- Person is transported through international borders
- Ends when the person has crossed the border or paid a fee

Local: The Safe Harbor Act

- Passed by the 2012 Legislature and signed into law by Governor Rick Scott
- Helps ensure the safety of child victims who have been trafficked in Florida
- Allows children who are rescued from prostitution to get help from child welfare professionals instead of being placed in juvenile delinquency

Who are the Victims?

- Undocumented migrants
- Runaway and homeless youth
- Oppressed, marginalized, and/or impoverished groups and individuals
- Includes men, women, children and families
- Any vulnerability that can be exploited and manipulated by the trafficker

Source: Polaris Project

Why does it Occur?

- High profits
 - Yields \$32 billion per year
 - Ranks only behind drugs
- High Demand for cheap labor/ commercial sex
 - Low risk
 - Unlike drugs & arms, humans can be resold/reused

Source: Florida Department of Children and Families

Where does it Happen?

- Agriculture and landscaping
- Hotels and restaurants
- Sex Industry: Prostitution (Brothels and “Delivery Services”), Strip Clubs, Massage Parlors, Pornography
- Domestic Service: Housekeeping and Au Pairs
- Factories and sweatshops

Source: Florida Department of Children and Families

How are Victims Recruited?

- Fraud
- Trickery
- False promises
- Familiarity

Source: Florida Freedom Partnership, a program of the International Rescue Committee



Who are the Traffickers?

- “Mom and Pop” organizations
 - Caretakers and/or people posing as such
 - Labor subcontractors
 - Organized crime
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- Gang members
 - Diplomats
 - Members of the victims own community
 - Have significant social or political status in their home countries

How are the Victim's Controlled?

- Psychological abuses
- Beatings, burnings, sexual abuse, starvation
- Isolation
- Threats of deportation

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- Threats against the victims family members
 - Drug/alcohol dependency
 - Withholding of documents

Indicators

- Is the victim in possession of identification and travel documents; if not, who?
- Was the victim coached on what to say to law enforcement and immigration officials?
- Was the victim recruited for one purpose and forced to engage in some other job?

Indicators (continued)

- Is the victim's salary being garnished to pay off a smuggling fee? (Paying off a smuggling fee alone is not considered trafficking)
- Was the victim forced to perform sexual acts?
- Does the victim have freedom of movement?

Indicators (continued)

- Has the victim or family been threatened with harm if they escape?
- Has the victim been threatened with deportation or law enforcement action?
- Has the victim been harmed or deprived of food, water, sleep, medical care or other life necessities?

Indicators (continued)

- Is the victim allowed to socialize or attend religious services?
- Can the victim freely contact friends or family?
- Is the victim a juvenile engaged in commercial sex?

Needs of a Victim

- Housing
 - Legal assistance
 - Crisis intervention
 - Interpretation services
 - Clothing
 - Food
 - Protection
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- Employment
 - Substance abuse treatment
 - Childcare
 - Life skills
 - Education
 - Physical and mental health
 - Transportation

Services

- Case management
- Legal assistance
- Clinical intervention
- Safe & appropriate housing



Who Refers?

- Social service providers
 - Health professionals
 - Law enforcement
 - Federal agencies
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- Self-referral
 - Churches
 - Community

Where Can You Refer?

- National Human Trafficking Resource Center
 - 1.888.373.7888 (200 Languages)
 - nhtrc@polarisproject.org
 - <http://.traffickingresourcecenter.org/report-trafficking>
- International Rescue Committee
 - 1.866.443.0106

What can you do?

- Volunteer
- Donate
- Join a local task force



Contact Information

IRC's Anti-trafficking Program

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Toll-Free Hotline: 1-866-443-0106

Thank You!