



## Fact Sheet: Sex Trafficking

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Sex trafficking is the inducement of individuals into the commercial sex trade against their will by force or coercion. For victims under the age of 18, any involvement in the commercial sex trade is an act of sex trafficking, regardless if the trafficker used force or coercion. An estimated 1,200 children (ages 12-17) are sex trafficked in Ohio each year.<sup>1</sup> Both federal law and state law ban sex trafficking. Ohio's recently enacted Safe Harbor Law increased the penalties for sex trafficking and sought to increase care for victims.

Sex traffickers use a variety of tactics to induce individuals, including making promises of legal employment or lucrative paying work, and using debt bondage, violence, lies, and manipulation to force victims into the sex trade. Anyone can be a victim. While some traffickers target undocumented workers or foreign nationals, many victims are US citizens. Poverty and a history of abuse may make someone vulnerable to exploitation, but it is only one factor.

### Sex trafficking Warning Signs

Many victims do not identify as victims of sex trafficking. Below are red flags that may indicate that someone is being exploited in the commercial sex trade:

- Unable to come and go freely and appears to be controlled (rarely alone, kept away from family and friends, cannot speak for self)
- Exhibits fearful and anxious behaviors
- Has a "boyfriend" who is much older
- Moves often and cannot give a current address
- Unaware of what city he/she is in; mentions travelling to other cities; loses sense of time
- Shows signs of physical abuse, malnourishment or starvation
- Does not have own IDs (such as driver's license, passport) or is not in control of own documents
- No control over own money, has few personal possessions

### Barriers to Getting Help

- Victims blame themselves and may believe the lies they have been told by traffickers
- Distrust of law enforcement and social services, especially in cases where the trafficker has told the victim they will be arrested
- Victims often have very little freedom of movement and may be held captive in homes or businesses with bars, barbed wire and security systems.
- In some instances, language and cultural barriers

## Ohio and National Resources

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### Hotlines

To report suspected sex trafficking or to connect with services, contact the following hotlines.

**National Hotline: 1-888-373-7888 or text BeFree (233733).** The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) is a national, toll-free hotline, available to answer calls and texts from anywhere in the country, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year. The hotline connects survivors with local service providers.

- **Greater Cincinnati Human Trafficking Hotline:** 513-800-1863
- **Central Ohio Rescue and Restore Hotline for trafficked persons:** 614-285-4357 (HELP)
- **Cleveland STAR (Sex Trafficking Advocacy and Recovery) 24-Hour Hotline:** 855-431-STAR (7827)
- **Cleveland area - Northern Tier Anti-Human Trafficking Consortium hotline:** 1-800-837-5345

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<sup>1</sup> See CLEVELAND RAPE CRISIS CENTER, *Project STAR, Sex Trafficking Advocacy and Recovery*, at <http://www.clevelandrapecrisis.org/uploads/Sitepage/Project%20STAR%20Insert.pdf> (last visited November 29, 2013).

## Organizations

**To find a local rape crisis center:** Call the Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence at 216-658-1381 or 888-886-8388 or visit <http://www.oaesv.org/rape-crisis-centers-in-ohio/>.

### Cincinnati/Southwest Ohio

- **Catholic Charities of Southwest Ohio:** Services for survivors. Call 513-241-7745; visit <http://ccswoh.org/>
- **End Slavery Cincinnati:** Coalition providing services and awareness building. Call 513-762-5658; <http://www.endslavercincinnati.org/>

### Columbus

- **Central Ohio Rescue and Restore:** a coalition representing social services, faith-based, medical and law enforcement organizations. Call 614-285-4357; <http://www.centralohiorescueandrestore.org/>.
- **Gracehaven:** Services for domestic victims of sex trafficking. Call 614-886-7011; <http://gracehaven.me/>.
- **Traffickfree:** Builds awareness about domestic sex trafficking and sexually exploited children in the U.S. Call 740-405-1308; [www.traffickfree.com](http://www.traffickfree.com)
- **Asian American Community Services:** Services for survivors of violence, including sex trafficking. Call 614-220-4023; <http://aacsohio.org/>
- **Catholic Social Services:** Services for victims. Call (614) 221-5891; <http://colscs.org/>

### Toledo

- **Second Chance Toledo:** Comprehensive services to domestic sex trafficking survivors and their families. Call 419-244-6050; <http://www.secondchancetoledo.org/>

### Cleveland

- **Cleveland Rape Crisis Center - Cleveland STAR (Sex Trafficking Advocacy and Recovery)** Provides services for survivors and a 24-Hour Hotline: Call 855-431-STAR (7827); <http://www.clevelandrapecrisis.org/>
- **Collaborative to End Human Trafficking/Catholic Charities of Cleveland:** Coalition aimed at educating the public, connecting survivors with services and advocating for abolition of human trafficking. Call 440-356-2254; <http://collaborativeinitiative.org/>
- **Northern Tier Anti-Human Trafficking Consortium (NTAC) International Services Center:** Main: 216-781-4560 ext. 1009; Hotline: 1-800-837-5345
- **Human Trafficking Collaborative of Lorain County:** Main: 440-714-1380; coalition of county agencies providing referrals, services and support. Call 440-714-1380; <http://www.itcouldbemelorain.com/>

### For Further Information

- **Ohio Attorney General's Office:** <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/HumanTrafficking>
- **Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force Recommendations:** <http://www.governor.ohio.gov/Portals/o/pdf/news/OhioHumanTraffickingTaskForceReport.pdf>
- **Second Chance Toledo** – link to Ohio and national resources: <http://www.secondchancetoledo.org/secondchance/resources>
- **Polaris Project:** A leading organization in the fight against global human trafficking. Operates the national hotline. <http://www.polarisproject.org/>
- **Anti-Trafficking in Persons** (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services): <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/programs/anti-trafficking>
- **American Anti-Slavery Group:** <http://www.iabolish.org/>
- **Coalition Against Trafficking in Women:** <http://www.catwinternational.org/>

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For help, contact the Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence at 216.658.1381 or 888.886.838, or [info@oaesv.org](mailto:info@oaesv.org)

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