

# Human Trafficking

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children  
*at Risk*

1. Which State in the USA is most affected by Human Trafficking?

- A. New York
- B. Texas
- c. California

2. Under Texas law what is the minimum age a child can be charged with prostitution

- A. 17 years
- B. 14 years
- c. No minimum age

3. Under the trafficking victims and protection act (TVPA) at what age can a person consent to commercial sex act

- A. 18 years
- B. 16 years
- C. Based on age of consent in each state

4. U.S. Citizens and Permanent residents most often become victims of what type of trafficking?

- A. Forced Labor
- B. Sex Trafficking
- C. Organ Trafficking

5. Which city accounted for the most calls from Texas to the national human trafficking hotline?

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- A. Dallas
- B. Houston
- C. El Paso

6. What is the approximate number of people that the US Department of Justice estimates are victims of Human trafficking who are brought into the US every year?

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- A. 5,000
- B. 17,500
- C. 29,000

7. Approximately how many children runaway from home in the United States each year?

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- A. 200,000
- B. 600,000
- C. over 1 million

8. What percentage of runaways are lured into Sex Trafficking each year?

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- A. 10%
- B. 30%
- C. 45%

## 9. What happens when children are picked up for prostitution?

- A. Taken Home
- B. Taken to CPS
- C. Taken to the Juvenile Justice System

10. What is the average age of entry into prostitution?

- A. 13
- B. 15
- C. 19

**End of Quiz**

Who is still  
standing?



# The Law and Human Trafficking

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# HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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International

v.

Domestic



# Federal Legislation

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Focused on  
International Victims



# Federal Law: TVPA Overview

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- In October 2000, the **Trafficking Victim's Protection Act** (TVPA) was enacted by the United States Congress in an effort to combat human trafficking by promoting prevention, protection, and prosecution.
- TVPA, the first federal law to protect human trafficking victims, describes the crime as modern day slavery or coerced labor.
- Additionally, it provides victims with access to protection and public assistance when in the United States by providing “**restorative care**” and “**immigration relief**”.



# TVPA Overview

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- **Prevention:** The authorization of education and public awareness programs.
- **Protection:** Assistance for victims of trafficking including T-visas, job training, education, health care, and other federally-funded services.
- **Prosecution:** The enactment of stiff federal penalties for those identified as traffickers



# Texas Human Trafficking Definition

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- Texas was one of the first two states to criminalize human trafficking in 2003
- A minor is considered a person under 18
- The term “traffic” is NOT dependent on the element of “transport”
- The language “forced labor or services” includes the use of threats against a victim or her family, threat of legal action, and threat of deportation.
- The term “Force” also includes the idea of “exerting financial control over a victim”
- Imposes greater penalties when the victim is under 18 years old.



## 80<sup>th</sup> Legislative Victories (2007)

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- Mandated bars to post a sign in both English and Spanish about forced labor and a toll-free referral number for victims of trafficking.
- Put more “teeth” in the state human trafficking law by amending it to include threats in the definition of “force labor or services.”
  - Threats of deportation
  - Threats of withholding their documents



## 81<sup>st</sup> Legislative Victories (2009)

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- Mandated law enforcement training
- Established a statewide task force in the Office of the Attorney General
- Established a committee to evaluate alternatives to the juvenile justice system for children who are accused of engaging in acts of prostitution.

# Signing of House Bill 4009





## Case Law: Texas Supreme Court

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- June 19, 2010 the Texas Supreme Court ruled on the case, *In the Matter of B.W*
- Held that children under 14 are victims of prostitution and cannot be charged with the crime of prostitution
- Rejected State argument that only way to get kids off street was through arrest, citing Tex. Fam. Law Code Sec. 262.104



## 82<sup>nd</sup> Legislative Agenda (2011)

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- Create a way for the safe house to take custody of minor trafficking victims, without requiring parental consent
- Decriminalize children under 18 years of age from prostitution  
(recognize them as victims)
- Remove the requirement to prove that a trafficker convinced a minor to engage in commercial sex through force, fraud, or coercion  
(makes it easier to prosecute traffickers)
- Allocate the forfeited assets of traffickers to a victim assistance fund that serves human trafficking victims.



## 82<sup>nd</sup> Legislative Agenda (2011)

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- Create liability against third parties who knowingly benefit from trafficking situations such as taxi drivers, hotel owners, etc.
- Decrease the demand side of the commercial sex industry by:
  - Increasing criminal fines against johns
  - Impounding the vehicles of johns



# National Four-Step Movement

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1. Awareness
2. State Legislation
3. Safe Houses
4. Ending Demand



# Texas Safe House Movement

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- The Letot Center in Dallas serves runaway victims but is not specifically devoted to DMSTs
  - Short-term residence facility for 40 girls and boys, aged 10-17
  - Serves as a diversion for adolescents from the juvenile justice system
- There is a movement for developing a model for a public/private partnership safe house in Houston



# Federal Safe House Movement

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- Nationwide there are currently only 84 beds for minor trafficking victims
- Programs already in place:
  - Atlanta – Angela’s House 3 homes
  - GEMS, New York City
  - Children of the Night, Los Angeles
  - The Hope House, Ashville, NC
  - Courtney’s House, Northern Virginia
  - SAGE Project, San Francisco
  - The Letot Center, Dallas



# Atlanta

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- Angela's House
  - 6 beds; 6 months
- Wellspring Living – Victory Cottage
  - 14 beds; 4-6 months but can be longer
- Living Water for Girls
  - 10 beds; up to a year or longer
- Girls are referred from the juvenile court or the Division of Family and Children Services



# New York

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- GEMS serves girls aged 12-21.
  - Served 280 directly in 2009, with a total of 13 beds and provided outreach and education to another 1,000.
- GEMS has two houses:
  - House A is transitional housing for girls 16-21. The girls must have no kids, be in school or working full-time, and can only remain for 18 months.
  - House B serves girls who are in danger of returning to a domestic violence situation.
- 55% referred by court as an alternative to detention.



# Los Angeles

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- Children of the Night is a residential shelter for specifically for victims of domestic human trafficking
  - Houses 24 boys and girls, aged 11-18
  - The duration of stay varies from as little as a few months to up to four years, but victims may stay as long as necessary
- Completely voluntary program



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**State and National  
Partners in the Fight  
against Human  
Trafficking**

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## Statewide Partners

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- Statewide Attorney General taskforce
- Mosaic Family Services
- Human Rights Initiative of North Texas
- Catholic Charities
- Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition
- Texas RioGrande Legal Aid
- Various statewide coalitions

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# National Partners

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- AFNAP
- Polaris Project
- Shared Hope International
- ECPAT
- Not For Sale Campaign



# AFNAP

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- Research will help advocacy efforts by, among other things, documenting the extent of the human trafficking problem



# What You Can Do

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## What You Can Do

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- Call your representatives at the local, state, and national levels and let them know you care about this issue and to make it a priority
- Demand a safe house for your community



# Report Human Trafficking

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- Report suspicious behavior and nuisance activities
  - Call the National Human Trafficking Hotline  
**1-888-3737-888**
    - You can remain anonymous
    - Operated 24/7
- In 2009, the National Hotline reported that:
  - 12% of the calls came from Texas
  - More than 14% of the calls from Texas were from Dallas



# Questions??

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Please Contact:

Robert Sanborn, Ed.D.

[sanborn@childrenatrisk.org](mailto:sanborn@childrenatrisk.org)

713-869-7740

[www.childrenatrisk.org](http://www.childrenatrisk.org)

**children**  
*at Risk*