

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING



Human trafficking occurs when an individual is exploited or held against their will, often for sex or labor. This is a criminal offense and, if suspected or observed, should be reported to authorities. Given the nature of the crime, it may be difficult to know when trafficking is occurring. The following information includes statistics specific to Kansas, warning signs, and resources needed to understand this complex problem and how to provide assistance to students if trafficking is suspected.

## Who Is Impacted?

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC)<sup>1</sup> reported the following Kansas statistics for 2015:

- 31 sex trafficking reports (other types include labor, not specified, and sex and labor combined)
- 34 female victims
- 43 human trafficking cases reported
- 16 minors
- 126 calls were received regarding human trafficking. Of those calls, 43 were from community members while only 8 were received from victims. This stresses the important role that community members have in identifying and assisting those who are victims of this crime.

## What Does It Look Like?

The following signs may indicate that an individual is a victim of human trafficking. Utilize the following resources if it is suspected that a student is at risk.

### ***Home and Personal***

- Multiple individuals live together in one space
- Living at a work or job site
- Dating an individual with an unusual age difference
- Sexual references that are not age appropriate

### ***Mental and Physical Health***

- Symptoms of physical or sexual abuse
- Depressed, sad, or fearful
- Symptoms of drug use
- Anxious, tense, or worried
- Appears to lack adequate nourishment

### ***School***

- Absenteeism
- Lacks appropriate supplies or apparel
- Noticeable change in or difficulties with assignments or grades

## **Effects**

As might be expected from the examples above, the effects of human trafficking can be severe and far-reaching. A student who has experienced trafficking may suffer from poor health or access to medical care. The trauma associated with such treatment may cause symptoms of depression, anxiety, paranoia, or PTSD. If students frequently miss school or are fearful of others learning about their situation, they may become socially isolated or experience diminished academic performance. It is reasonable to conclude that students may experience many of these symptoms even if they are not the direct target of human trafficking, but instead have witnessed parents or other family members being exploited.

## **What Schools Can Do**

- Schools can provide educational opportunities and materials to staff regarding the signs and risk factors of human trafficking.
- If it is suspected that a student is a victim of human trafficking (or witnessing such crimes) schools can assess a student's situation and report concerns to authorities.

## **References**

- <sup>1</sup> National Human Trafficking Resource Center. (n.d.). 2015 Kansas statistics. Retrieved from <https://traffickingresourcecenter.org/state/kansas>

## Resources

- **Human Trafficking in America's Schools (U.S. Department of Education)**  
<https://traffickingresourcecenter.org/resources/human-trafficking-americas-schools>
- **Human Trafficking Awareness for Educators (NHTRC)**  
<https://traffickingresourcecenter.org/resources/human-trafficking-awareness-educators>
- **Human Trafficking Assessment Tool for Educators (NHTRC)**  
<https://traffickingresourcecenter.org/resources/human-trafficking-assessment-tool-educators>
- **NHTRC Reporting and Resources (24/7 Confidential): 1-888-373-7888**
- **Human Trafficking in-Depth Review for Educators**  
<https://traffickingresourcecenter.org/resources/human-trafficking-depth-review-educators>
- **Human Trafficking in Kansas**  
<http://ag.ks.gov/public-safety/human-trafficking>
- **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children**  
<http://www.missingkids.org/home>
- **National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC)**  
<https://traffickingresourcecenter.org/>
- **Polaris**  
<https://polarisproject.org/human-trafficking>
- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Office on Trafficking in Persons**  
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/endtrafficking/programs/rescue-and-restore>
- **U.S. Department of State: Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons**  
<http://www.state.gov/j/tip/>