

January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month. January 11th is the National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness.

Matthew 18:12 How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? (KJV)

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all (KJV)

Human sex trafficking is a kind of modern-day slavery. Traffickers control and exploit their victims for profit. The US federal law defines victims of human sex trafficking in three categories:

- a. Minors (under age 18) induced into commercial sex
- b. Adults (age 18 or over) involved in commercial sex trade by force, fraud, or coercion
- c. Children and adults forced to perform labor and/or services in conditions of involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery through force, fraud, or coercion, such as domestic workers held in a home, or farm workers forced to labor against their will.

Why is this important?

This is modern-day slavery. A slave does not have a voice. A slave works for the “master” and is “taken care of” by him/her. A slave is used and abused at the whims of its master. A slave has no rights.

It is a CRIME punishable by law. The Abolition of Child Commerce Exploitation and Sexual Slavery Act of 2011 (AB12, Swanson) enacted 7/2011. Individuals procuring sexual services from a minor to pay and additional fine (up to \$25,000) to fund programs for these children. The tragedy is that OPD does not arrest these perpetrators, but does arrest the girls and women.

Children are victims! They are not accountable for this coercion. This exploitation can be initiated by parents, foster parents, relatives, family, friends and of course strangers.

Girls are trafficked as young as 10. The average age that girls are enticed into this trade is 12-14 years old. Boys are trafficked too. Many have been raped at a much earlier age as young as 2 or 3 years old. It changes who they are.

Human Trafficking is the world’s second most profitable criminal industry (along with illegal arms trafficking). The most profitable industry involves drugs.

It is a 32 Billion dollar a year global industry. Nationally it is about a \$15, 000,000,000 enterprise. Consequently, many drug dealers (on all levels) are more interested in human trafficking because “a prostitute can be used over and over again.” As opposed to a product that is consumable.

Much of human trafficking now occurs through social media, online chat services, and the Internet. Please KNOW what your children are watching on their laptops. There are many predators lurking to entice them.