

Human trafficking in Colorado



LABORATORY TO COMBAT
HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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By the end of this training, you will...

- Understand the nuances that distinguish human trafficking from other crimes from a legal and lived experience perspective
- Be able to identify potential victims or high risk individuals through red flags or other indicators
- Understand Colorado-specific vulnerabilities and scenarios
- Understand youth - specific vulnerabilities
- Have new resources to support continued learning and trauma-informed referrals

What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking =

**A severe form of exploitation for labor
(including sex) through the use of
force, fraud, or coercion.**

Trafficking laws in the United States (TVPA):

Three categories of trafficking

1. Those under 18 involved in commercial sex acts
2. Those 18 and over involved in commercial sex acts through force, fraud or coercion
3. Those forced to perform labor and/or services in conditions of involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery through force, fraud or coercion

Not limited to people who are foreign-born, youth, or females

Consideration of Minors

- A minor cannot consent to commercial sex
- Force, fraud, coercion do NOT have to be proven
- Thinking the minor was an adult is NOT a defense
- Labor trafficking of a minor DOES need proof of force, fraud, coercion



Action

Recruit
Harbor
Transport
Provide
Obtain

Means*

Force
Fraud
Coercion

Purpose

Commercial
sex acts
OR
Labor or
Services



Potential **COVID-19** pandemic impact on human trafficking

1. Heightened risks for those already exploited
2. Increased risk of exploitation
3. Disrupted response efforts

Potential COVID-19 pandemic impact on human trafficking

- Stay-in-place orders and economic pressures
- Release from detention centers, colleges, universities
- Isolation and limited support
- Online Education

Push and Pull Factors

**Abuse, neglect,
and isolation**

Homelessness

**Poverty, debts, and lack of
access to formal markets**

**Marginalized identity and
Discrimination**

Child welfare



Relationship

Family and home

**Income, dignity of work,
and security**

Acceptance, Opportunity


**Parental role or
stability**

Foster Care

“Being in foster care was the perfect training for commercial sexual exploitation. I was used to being moved without warning, without any say, not knowing where I was going or whether I was allowed to pack my clothes. After years in foster care, I didn’t think anyone would want to take care of me unless they were paid. So, when my pimp expected me to make money to support ‘the family,’ it made sense to me.”

Walker, 2013, 14

Pathways to Entry

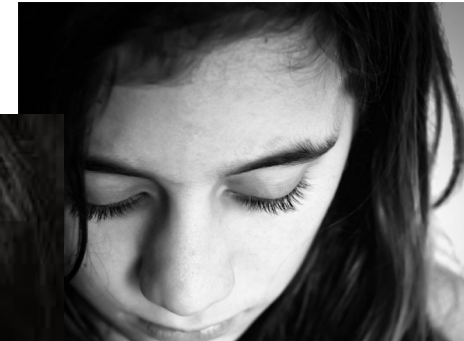
- **Parents selling children**
- **Violence** and force, kidnapping
- **Seduction** and coercion
- **False advertising:** modeling, acting, sales crews dancing opportunities
- **Peer recruitment-victim/perpetrator**
- **Internet enticement** through chat rooms or profile-sharing sites
- **Relationship/Intimacy** 

Child Sex Trafficking as a form of Child Abuse and Neglect

HB 16-1224

- Defines child sex trafficking as a form of child abuse when there is a third party offender (January 2017).
- Amended this law to include child labor trafficking (May 2019)
- Requires DHS > LE MOUs
- **Colorado Child Abuse Hotline: 1-844-CO-4-KIDS**

The Ideal Victim



**LOOK
BENEATH
THE SURFACE**

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS
MODERN-DAY SLAVERY**

A victim of trafficking may look like many of the people you see everyday.

Ask the right questions and look for clues. You are vital because you may be the only outsider with the opportunity to speak with a victim.

There are safe housing, health, immigration, food, income, employment, legal and interpretation services available to victims, but first they must be found.

If you think someone is a victim of trafficking, **call 1.888.3737.888**
For more information about human trafficking visit www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking.



Don't be afraid to say it for her!

Your courage is her hope. If you believe she is being hurt or kept against her will, please call us and we'll help. All calls and emails are anonymous.

**Tel: +420 605 988 566
+420 222 717 171**

www.say-it.cz mail@say-it.cz

**TOGETHER AGAINST
HUMAN
TRAFFICKING**

Who is missing?



“I got upset when I realized what he was doing, but I kept doing it because he made me feel like I was special.”

— Sacharay



To work on the
issue of human
trafficking
means
asking yourself
and others to
care about...
those who are
often perceived
as “unworthy”
and rarely
considered
victims.

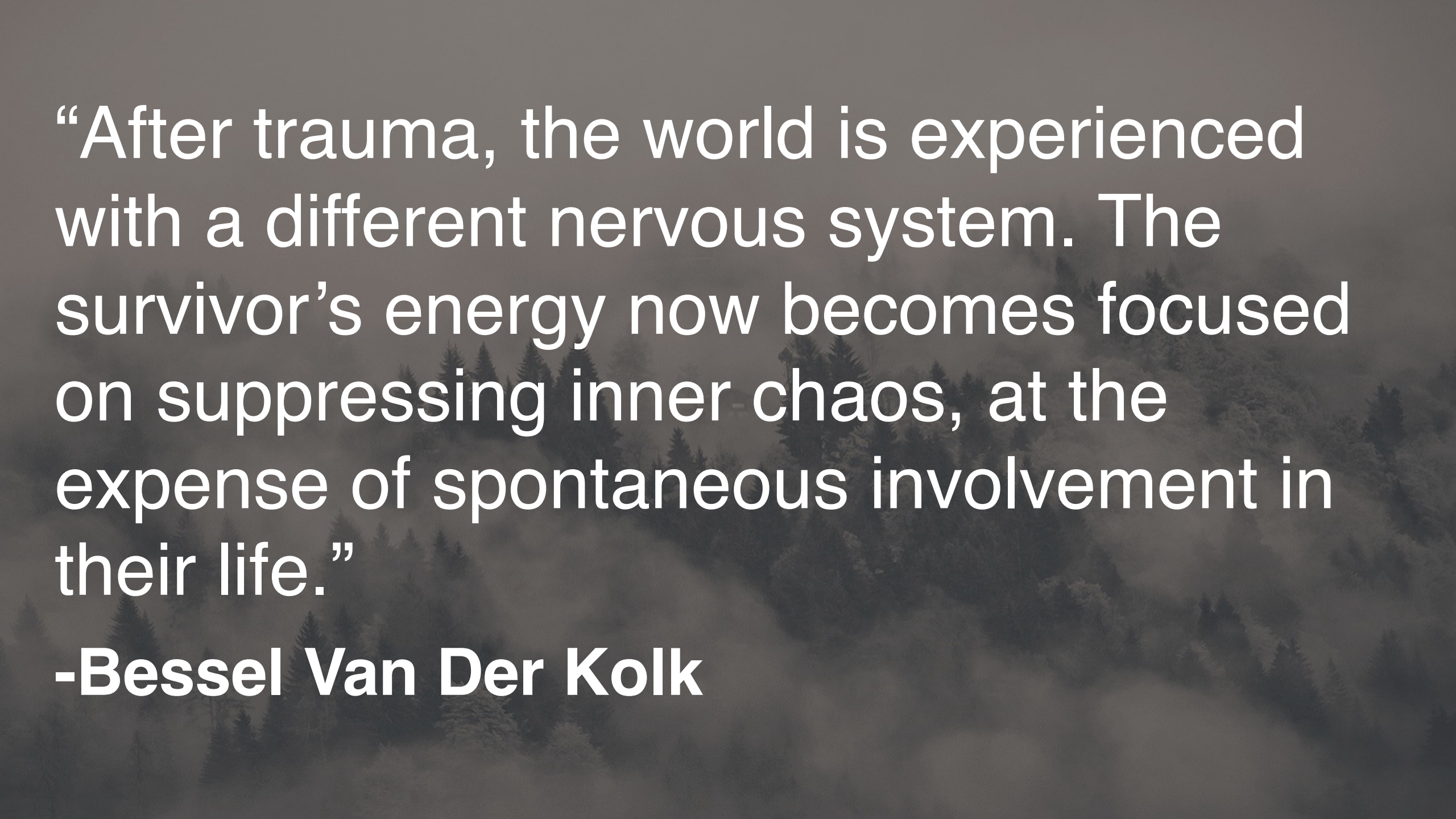
Sex workers
**Undocumented
workers**
Asylees/ Refugees
Homeless individuals
Runaway youth
**Individuals with
addictions**



What is trauma?

A traumatic experience . . .

- Threatens the life or physical integrity of the individual or someone important to that person (parent, child, grandparent, sibling, partner)
- Causes an overwhelming sense of terror, helplessness, and horror
- Produces intense physical effects
- Contributes to social isolation and identity challenges
- Brain gets stuck in FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE > Survival Mode

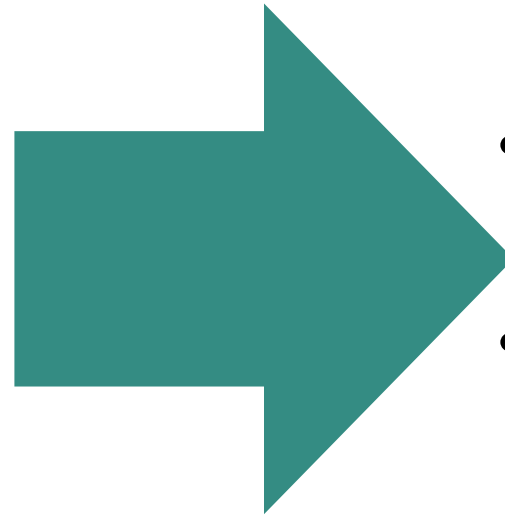


“After trauma, the world is experienced with a different nervous system. The survivor’s energy now becomes focused on suppressing inner chaos, at the expense of spontaneous involvement in their life.”

-Bessel Van Der Kolk

Common survivor reactions

- **Shame**
- **Embarrassment**
- **Sense of duty or loyalty**
- **Fear of reprisals from trafficker**
- **Mistrust of institutions or law enforcement**



- Refuse services or assistance
- Show no emotional reactions
- Uninterested in cooperation with investigation or prosecution
- Irritable and/or uncooperative

Complexities of Identification

•
**Most survivors
will not ask for
help!**

- Language
- Unaware of or unable to access rights
- Social or physical isolation
- Stigma or shame
- Fear of retribution
- Distrust of systems, law enforcement, or outsiders

Additional complexities for young people who identify as LGBTQIA+

Myriad societal and interpersonal abuses which can lead to:

- Increased risk of trauma
- Increased risk of homelessness
- Isolation
- Stigma & discrimination (fear)
- Institutionalized bias in education, law enforcement, child welfare and healthcare systems (trust)
- Not being included in the common narrative (less identification)
- Biased notions of who is “innocent” and who is “guilty”
- Barriers to accessing resources due to identity (religious organizations, gender-specific)

Red Flags and Indicators of Trafficking:

Physical Indicators

- Unexplained injuries (multiple scars, broken teeth)
- Evidence of prolonged infection or time since injury
- Signs of malnourishment or generally poor health:
Malnutrition, dehydration, exhaustion
- Frequent or repeated STIs
- Multiple or frequent pregnancy/abortions
- Tattoos or other types of branding
- Evidence of sexual trauma
- Substance misuse

Red Flags and Indicators of Trafficking:

Behavioral Indicators

- Individual claims to be “just visiting” an area; the individual does not know their current location
- Individual has numerous inconsistencies in their story
- Someone is claiming to speak for, or on behalf of them
- Individual does not have any type of legal documentation
- Not making eye contact
- Individual not being in control of their identification documents
- Paying with cash

Red Flags and Indicators of Trafficking:

Mental health Indicators

How a survivor responds will be affected by their own experiences, the accessibility of support, their coping and life skills and those of immediate family, and the responses of the larger community in which they live.

- Trauma can affect treatment presentation, engagement, and the outcome of behavioral health services.
- Trauma can lead to memory loss, disassociation, PTSD, paranoia, fear, anxiety, submission, tension and/or hostility
- Individual may either be in crisis, or may downplay existing health problems or risks
- Sleep deprivation, sometimes mixed with substances can lead to psychosis
- Co-occurring mental and substance-related disorders

What to look for with young people

- Sporadic school attendance
- Constant fatigue, lack of attention, forgetfulness
- Use of 2 or more cell phones
- Reference to constant travel
- An older/controlling “boyfriend” or “girlfriend”
- Knowledge of commercial sex industry (i.e. using language like “daddy” for a boyfriend)
- Desire to quit a job and not being allowed to
- Living with an employer or employer is student’s caregiver
- Accumulates debt to employer
- Signs of substance abuse
- Lack of control over schedule
- Has explicitly sexual online profile

Teacher/coach/leader grooming signs

- Frequent attention to particular student(s)
- Approval-seeking behaviors and mannerisms towards students
- A shift in student's behavior (possibly towards/around abuser)
- Inappropriate sexual commentary
- Appears to be “too comfortable” with physical touch
- Special, individualized attention

**** *Trust your gut***

Lack of trauma informed institutions *leads to...*

- Punishment of trauma behaviors
- Mischaracterization of 'choice'
- Example of schools 'missing it'
- Retraumatization (juvenile corrections, Residential Child Care Facility, service providers who are not trauma informed)

A CYCLE OF ABUSE AND IMPRISONMENT

New arrest occurs
and cycle repeats
and deepens

Trauma coping
behaviors resume
and/or re-entry into
abusive environment

Release into
community with
exacerbated
trauma symptoms

Trauma symptoms
triggered and/or new
incidents of abuse

Sexual abuse
sex trafficking, abusive
home, poorly
supervised child
welfare placement

Unaddressed trauma,
mental health, physical
health issues

Reactive behavior

Entry into Juvenile
Justice (For prostitution,
status offenses,
incorrigible behaviors,
etc.)

*(Sex Abuse to Prison Pipeline, 2015)

Are you ok? Ask questions like...

- Is anyone forcing you to do anything you don't want to do?
- Can you leave your work or living situation if you wanted to?
- Have you (or your family) been threatened if you try to leave?
- Are any basic needs being held from you? (food, water, sleep, medical care)
- Do you have control over the money you earn?
- Are you allowed to contact family or friends?
- Have you ever exchanged sex for food, money, clothing, or shelter? (If the answer is yes, it is important to establish if force, fraud, or coercion are associated with these actions for adults)

Ask questions like:

- “What would you do if a good-looking older guy came up to you and said he thought you were pretty enough to be a model? Would you give him your phone number?”
- “Is it okay for a stranger to take pictures of you?”
- “Do you know anyone at school that has an older boyfriend?”
- “Have any of your friends ever talked about getting paid to go on dates?”
- “Has anyone ever sent you a picture that made you feel uncomfortable?”
- “What would you do if someone sent you an inappropriate picture or asked you for one?”

Harm Reduction Techniques

Safety planning is a harm reduction technique that helps to prepare an individual for situations that might lead to vulnerabilities and being exploited. It is not, condoning the choices or behavior, but rather acknowledging that the choice lies within the person and ensuring that the individual can remain as safe as possible.

A safety plan might include:

- **Run plans:** Where to sleep safely, where to access to a free phone, memorizing or safely storing numbers to call if you are in trouble
- **Safe ways to use substances:** Never credit or front drugs, only exchange cash for drugs, know who you are using with, know who you are buying from, know your limits
- **Safe work/employment practices:** Make sure you sign a contract, but ensure you never sign something you don't read first, never allow late payment for wages, keep working hours, know your rights!



COLORADO'S **HUMAN TRAFFICKING** HOTLINE



**Report
Tips**



CALL

866-455-5075

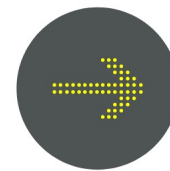


**Request
Referrals**



TEXT

720-999-9724



**Get
Help**



SEARCH

[combathumantrafficking.org/
directory](https://combathumantrafficking.org/directory)

What role can you play?

- **Identification:** Often survivors will present with experiences or illnesses that are not necessarily a direct result of their trafficking and/or they may not self-identify as having been trafficked. As you build trust and learn more, taking red flags into account, you may be able to identify the trafficking experience and treat the resulting trauma differently and/or support an investigation.
- **Belief, Trust & Recovery:** You may be one of the first people that believes the survivor, build trust as a “supportive adult” or someone “within a system,” and set someone out on a path to recovery.
- **Education & Advocacy:** You may be working alongside other service providers or law enforcement that have not received HT training or are trauma-informed. You can advocate for an informed trauma-response, victim-centered (instead of victim dependent) investigations, and a two or three generation approach to healing.
- **How you ask questions and interpret responses matters!**

What can we do to create change?

- Redefine the “ideal victim.”
- Reinforce for fluidity and flexibility of services.
- Develop and promote more trans-affirming approaches to service provision and advocacy.
- Structural change takes time and money, and often the organizations doing this work are stretched thin. We need to support organizations doing this work financially.
- Training for educators, child welfare, healthcare, law enforcement to understand the nuances, the data, and the reality of institutional bias.
- Include diverse survivors in all stages of change (on staff, in working groups, making policy decisions, in service provision).

Questions



<https://www.bandt.com.au/information/uploads/2019/03/iStock-1024073052-1260x840.jpg>

Extra slides for answering questions

Factors that contribute to human trafficking in Colorado

- Agriculture/Ranching/Energy
- Tourism/ski resorts
- Construction
- Transfer points (highways)
- Marijuana grows
- Denver International Airport
- Demand for sex with minors
- Demand for cheap products
- Immigration influxes



Colorado Data

- FBI initiated 40 investigations in 2019 with 38 sex/ 2 labor with 27 juvenile recoveries and 35 adult (28 arrests)
- LCHT received 696 calls/texts in 2020 to the CO HT Hotline (530 individuals)
- 2018: CDHS received 302 referrals for sex trafficking
- 2019: HSI initiated 1,024 investigations (13 in CO, 2 labor)
- 6 ongoing civil labor trafficking cases in Colorado in 2020
- 2019 DOJ initiation 607 investigations

Federal Victims of Crime Funded Programs, Victims Served in COLORADO, FY2014-2019

YEAR	BREAKDOWN OF PROFILE			
	Open Cases	New Cases	Foreign National	U.S. Citizen
2014	54	21	46	8
2015	113	59	80	33
2016	104	40	63	41
2017	188	60	91	97
2018	81	22	75	6
2019	120	33	112	8

State Judicial Cases and Filings of the 2014 Human Trafficking Statutes, CY 2016-2018

	2014 Filings	2015 Filings	2016 Filings	2017 Filings	2018 Filings	2019 Filings	Totals # of Filings
Involuntary Servitude § 18- 3-503	1	1	3	1	4	6	16
Sexual Servitude- Adult § 18-3- 504	7	22	17	17	7	11	81
Sexual Servitude- Minor § 18-3- 504	1	30	55	47	38	27	198
Total filings (cases)	9 (8 total cases)	53 (39 total cases)	75 (50 total cases)	65 (40 total cases)	48 (33 total cases)	44 (29 total cases)	295 (199 total cases)

Colorado Headlines



“Sean Crumpler, accused Aurora child sex trafficker, pleads guilty”
– **Denver Post, 2017**



“Fields of fear for Colorado illegal farm laborers”
– **Denver Post, 2009**



2018 – Federal jury awards \$330,000 to a family that was trafficked on a family farm in southeastern CO
- **Colorado Legal Services**

"Leader of Colorado sex trafficking ring gets 472-year term"
– **Denver Post, 2017**

COLORADO REVISED STATUTE 19-3-304

Any person required to report who has reasonable cause to know or suspect

- A child has been subjected to abuse or neglect
- Shall immediately upon receiving such information report or cause a report to be made of such fact
- To the county department, local law enforcement agency, or through the child abuse reporting hotline system

We all play a role in preventing **child abuse and neglect.**



1-844-CO-4-KIDS
(1-844-264-5437)