

Saint Augustine (FL) Branch



- There are 20.9 million victims (about the population of New York) of trafficking around the world. Domestically, Florida continues to rank third in the nation of the number of calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline.
- Victims of human trafficking include children, women and men who are subjected to sexual exploitation or forced labor through force, fraud, or coercion.
- According to a study of U.S (United States). Department of Justice human trafficking task force cases, 83 percent of sex trafficking victims identified in the United States were U.S. citizens. The average age that a trafficked victim is first used for commercial sex is 12-14. (State of Florida Human Trafficking Task Force)

Program

Welcome Address and Introduction of Panelists

Kristi Pierce, President AAUW of Saint Augustine

Panel Presenters:

Christy Gillis Coordinator Community Development Administration Dept of Children & Families & Freedom 7 HT Task Force

Detective Ed Scoggins St Johns County Sheriff's Office, Criminal Investigations Division Special Victim Unit

Dr. Lindsey Page Coordinator, School Counseling Services St. Johns County School District

Dr. Roberto Hugh Potter Professor, & Director of UCF (University of Central Florida) Center for the Study of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery

Tania Schmidt-Alpers Attorney Betty Griffin Center

Kelly Ponze, *Her Song*

Tables: Flagler Care Connect+, St Johns County School district, Betty Griffin Center, DCF (Dept of Children and Families), AAUW Branch, HT committee, Her Song, Center for the Study of HT and Modern Slavery



What is Human Trafficking?

Federal definition: “(a) sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or (b) the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.” Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 §22 U.S.C. 7102 (2008); Priv. L. No. 106-386, 8 C.F.R (Code of Federal Regulations). §1003.19 (2008). (TVPA) The Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014 (P.L. 113–183) requires the state plan for foster care and adoption assistance to demonstrate that the state agency has developed policies and procedures for identifying, documenting in agency records, and determining appropriate services with respect to, any child or youth over whom the state agency has responsibility for placement, care, or supervision who the state has reasonable cause to believe is, or is at risk of being, a victim of sex trafficking or a severe form of trafficking in persons.

State law: §787.06(2)(d), F.S., defines human trafficking as “transporting, soliciting, recruiting, harboring, providing, enticing, maintaining, or obtaining another person for the purpose of exploitation of that person.” The statute also outlines Florida’s goals of assisting victims and prosecuting offenders.

- Using Coercion for labor or services is a 1st Degree Felony. §787.06(3)(a), F.S.
- Using Coercion for commercial sexual activity is a 1st Degree Felony. §787.06(3)(b), F.S.
- Anyone who knowingly or in reckless disregard of the facts engages in or benefits financially by receiving anything of value from trafficking can be prosecuted §787.06(3), F.S.
- All human trafficking offenses can be prosecuted as RICO offenses in Florida as organized crime. §895.02(1)(a)26, F.S.
- Minors cannot consent to commercial sex. §796.001, F.S.
- Minors are not subject to arrest/prosecution for offering to commit prostitution. §796.07(2)(e), F.S. (effective Oct. 1, 2016)
- Buyers of minors for commercial sexual activity may be charged as human traffickers. §§796.001; 787.06(3)(g), F.S.
- Coercion is not an element for foreign or domestic minor sex trafficking.

Florida Safe Harbor Law (2012) §409.1678, F.S., Establishes that the dependency track rather than the delinquency track will be the standard approach in dealing with minors found to be engaged in commercial sex (domestic minor sex trafficking victims). It also establishes a limited number of beds for



victims in various locations and gives law enforcement the option of referring minors to DCF safe harbor facilities (with 24-hour supervision) instead of detention facilities.

Smuggling vs. Trafficking:

- Individual's choice = smuggling
- Force, fraud, coercion = trafficking
- Traffickers maintain ongoing control after border is crossed Who are the victims?

Victims of human trafficking can usually be divided into three populations:

- Children under age 18 induced into commercial sex; Adults aged 18 or over induced into commercial sex through force, fraud, or coercion & Children and adults induced to perform labor or services through force, fraud, or coercion

Signs of Human Trafficking

According to the [Polaris Project](#), signs of human trafficking can include:

- Poor Mental Health or Abnormal Behavior
 - Is fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid
 - "Exhibits unusually fearful or anxious behavior after bringing up law enforcement" ("Human Trafficking | NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION")
 - Avoids eye contact
- Poor Physical Health
 - Lacks health care
 - Appears malnourished
 - Shows signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, or torture
- Lack of Control
 - Has few or no personal possessions
 - Is not in control of his/her own money, no financial records, or bank account
 - Is not in control of his/her own identification documents (ID or passport)
 - "Is not allowed or able to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating)" ("Time to Speak Up")

Parents, guardians, caregivers, and teachers can take the following measures to help protect children from becoming victims of online child predators:

DISCUSS INTERNET SAFETY AND DEVELOP AN ONLINE SAFETY PLAN with children before they engage in online activity. Establish clear guidelines, teach children to spot red flags, and encourage children to



have open communication with you. (“Keeping Children Safe Online - United States Department of Justice”)

SUPERVISE YOUNG CHILDREN’S USE OF THE INTERNET, including periodically checking their profiles and posts. Keep electronic devices in open, shared areas of the home and consider setting time limits for their use. (“Keeping Children Safe Online - United States Department of Justice”)

REVIEW GAMES, APPS, AND SOCIAL MEDIA SITES before they are downloaded or used by children. Pay attention to apps and sites that feature end-to-end encryption, direct messaging, video chats, file uploads, and user anonymity, which are often relied on by online child predators. (“Keeping Children Safe Online - United States Department of Justice”)

“ADJUST PRIVACY SETTINGS AND USE PARENTAL CONTROLS for online games, apps, social media sites, and electronic devices.” (“Keeping Children Safe Online - United States Department of Justice”)

TELL CHILDREN TO AVOID SHARING PERSONAL INFORMATION, PHOTOS, AND VIDEOS ONLINE in public forums or with people they do not know in real life. Explain to your children that images posted online will be permanently on the internet.

“TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT BODY SAFETY AND BOUNDARIES, including the importance of saying ‘no’ to inappropriate requests both in the physical world and the virtual world.” (“Keeping Children Safe Online - United States Department of Justice”)

BE ALERT TO POTENTIAL SIGNS OF ABUSE, including changes in children’s use of electronic devices, attempts to conceal online activity, withdrawn behavior, angry outbursts, anxiety, and depression.

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO TELL A PARENT, GUARDIAN, OR OTHER TRUSTED ADULT if anyone asks them to engage in sexual activity or other inappropriate behavior.

IMMEDIATELY REPORT SUSPECTED ONLINE ENTICEMENT OR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF A CHILD by calling 911, contacting the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) (Federal Bureau of Investigation) at tips.fbi.gov, or filing a report with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) at 1-800-843-5678 or report.cybertip.org. Due to school closings and stay-at-home orders resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, children increased online presence may put them at greater risk of child exploitation. Parents, guardians, caregivers, and teachers can take the following measures to help protect children from becoming victims of online child predators:

Agencies addressing human trafficking:

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

Dept of Homeland Security (DHS)

Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)



Dept of Transportation (DOT)

Survive and Thrive Advocacy Center (STAC).

FL Dept of Health

FL Dept of Children and Families (DCF)

Florida Highway Patrol (FHP)

Sheriff & Police Departments

Networks encourage collaboration

National Association of Attorneys General - Human Trafficking Committee

Florida Statewide Council on Human Trafficking

FL Legislative districts: Human Trafficking task forces

Freedom 7 Human Trafficking Task Force: St Johns, Flagler, Volusia & Putnam counties

Voices for Florida – Open Doors Outreach Network

Providing trauma informed care 24/7/365

NE Florida: Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center

What Can You Do?

Educate Yourself

- Understand that there are many vulnerable populations
- Victims may need/want someone to “understand,” “help,” “provide”
- Polaris Project created & oversees the National Human Trafficking hotline & Builds data sets of real time trafficking activities; Creates targeted strategies to disrupt and prevent trafficking
- Dept of Homeland Security – Blue Campaign DHS partners with private sector, NGO’s, law enforcement; training, education, and awareness materials available

Be Aware



- Pay attention to people/situations you interact with or observe. For example, be aware of people delivered and picked up at work or residence as a group; person not allowed to speak for her/himself
- Report to National Human Trafficking Hotline: 888-373-7888 (or text HELP to 233733)
- Report to local Sheriff's office (SJSO 904-824-8304)

Legislation is in place to educate professionals

- Police -- 4 hours FDLE online mandatory training
- Health Care Professionals – 1 hour certification requirement
- FL Human Trafficking law requires posted human trafficking signs in all licensed health care facilities & other public places

Education and awareness could save someone's future

- Schools – age-appropriate awareness in Character Counts program
- Vacation rentals – expanding awareness of illicit use of premises
- Hotels – training & posters in larger chains
- Businesses – Free online workplace human trafficking training (STACPRO)
- Truck Drivers – Highway Heroes campaign

Remedies available for victims:

- Continued Presence (CP) is temporary immigration relief that can be granted when a federal law enforcement agency petitions to allow victims as potential witnesses to remain in the U.S. Someone with CP can legally live and work in the U.S. while the criminal case against the trafficker proceeds.
- The T Visa is a four-year visa that is available to a “victim of a severe form of trafficking” who, among other things, complies with reasonable requests of law enforcement for help in the investigation or prosecution of the trafficker. The T Visa also can provide immigration relief to the victim's immediate family and allows victims of human trafficking who are under 21 to petition for their spouse, children, parents, and unmarried siblings less than 18 years of age in the T Visa application. Adult victims of trafficking over 21 are eligible to include their spouse and unmarried children under 21.
- The U Visa is a remedy available to persons who are victims of certain violent crimes and have suffered serious and substantial abuse. They too must be helping in the investigation and prosecution of the crimes committed against them and like a T Visa, a U Visa also grants the applicant a four-year visa and can also include immigration relief for the victim's immediate family.
- Asylum is an available remedy for those who can show that they suffered persecution or have a well-founded fear of persecution on account of membership in a social group.
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status provides abused, abandoned, and neglected children a pathway to legal status in the U.S.
- VAWA relief provides the applicant with a way to “self-petition” for immigration status without the consent or knowledge of the abusive spouse or, in the case of a child, a parent who is either a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident.

- Trafficked persons are also eligible for a range of benefits under civil law. The federal 2002 Reauthorization of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) created a private right of action and successful cases have been brought under this law. Trafficking survivors also have rights of civil relief under labor laws, tort law, contracts and have also successfully sued under homeowners' policies: this is particularly relevant for people who have been trafficked into domestic servitude. "Section 772.104, F.S. also provides for a civil remedy against traffickers." ("HUMAN TRAFFICKING OVERVIEW - Florida Courts")
- A victim may petition the court for an expunction of a criminal history record resulting from the arrest or charges associated with crimes committed while the person was a victim of human trafficking. §943.0583(3), F.S.
- Florida labor trafficking victims can sue their traffickers for three times their financial damages. §772.104, F.S.
- Florida sex trafficking victims can sue their traffickers for three times the profits made by their pimps. §772.104, F.S.
- Trafficking victims under age 18 cannot be prosecuted for prostitution. Ch.2016-24, L.O.F. (Effective October 1, 2016).

Service needs of child victims:

Physical Health – referral and follow-up medical services with trauma-sensitive providers and consideration of gender and trafficking experiences Safe Harbor Homes/ Safe Foster Homes/ Other placement for coordination of medical services⁷

- Comprehensive health assessment, Reproductive health – pregnancy testing and family planning
- Medical problems associated with risk and maltreatment history
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Nutritional status
- Other specific medical issues

Mental Health – trauma-informed treatment services with licensed and experienced providers

- Trauma history/assessment of risk
- Treatment services over time with providers who have training and supervision to address sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation of children

Shelters, Drop-in Centers, and Housing Services for Trafficked Youth – specific to each community

Specialized Services for Pregnant and Parenting Youth - Teen mothers who have been involved in trafficking need healthy interactions, supportive relationships, and treatment of social, emotional, and interpersonal dysfunction to break the intergenerational cycle of abuse, and to protect and promote positive outcomes for their babies.

- Identification of teen parents and custody status of their infant or young child
- Physical health and periodic developmental assessments of young child with attention to medical problems associated with risk such as ...lack of immunizations, malnutrition, etc.
- Infant Mental Health assessment to include strengths and impact of the trauma on the mom/baby attachment and developing relationship
- Child Parent Psychotherapy or similar evidence-based program with trained clinicians to build parenting capacity over time
- Individualized service plan that may include:
"Residential placements for mom and baby together with parenting support for maintaining custody and promoting attachment relationship" ("HUMAN TRAFFICKING OVERVIEW - Florida Courts")



- Teen Parent Programs (specialized school programs)
- Home visiting programs
- Early Head Start and quality childcare placements
- Part C – Early Steps referrals to assess development of the young child
- “Specialized services for court-involved young parents Coordination of victim services” (“HUMAN TRAFFICKING OVERVIEW - Florida Courts”)
- Regular ongoing, multi-disciplinary meetings of stakeholders who are addressing the needs of trafficked youth and those that are parents in each community
- Victim’s services programs specific to each area

Resources:

1. <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/>
2. Women’s Foundation Florida -<https://www.womensfoundationfl.org/>
3. <https://voicesforflorida.org/webinars>
4. Report Cards on Child & Youth Sex Trafficking – State Action. National ...
<https://reportcards.sharedhope.org>
5. WWW.MYFLORIDAHOUSE.gov and www.flsenate.gov
For current statutes
6. <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/OneNetLibrary/27897/documents/Initiatives/HumanTrafficking/Human-Trafficking-Glossary-of-Terms.pdf>
7. [10 Things Local Governments Can Do to Stop Human Trafficking Adopt a Proclamation recognizing January as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness Month.](https://surviveandthriveadvocacy.org/local-government/)
<https://surviveandthriveadvocacy.org/local-government/> Adopt a local ordinance to enforce the
8. <https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2022/08/Human-Trafficking-Quick-Facts-Jan-2022.pdf>
9. Victim’s advocacy St Johns County Sheriff’s Office -
<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sjso.org%2Fresources%2Fvictims-advocacy%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cstechjk%40UFL.EDU%7Cb63d2ee8c70c4d96681f08d%7Caa55ace06%7C0d4da0f84a314d76ace60a62331e1b84%7C0%7C0%7C638004108026685410%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ikh1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sd=8NC96tiTiuvjCB%2F8ShaTufPu8xZgfYAMDqZaNmguUq0%3D&reserved=0>
10. https://www.flcourts.org/content/download/218950/file/Human_Trafficking_Overview.pdf
11. <http://myfloridalegal.com/pages.nsf/Main/8AEA5858B1253D0D85257D34005AFA72>



12. <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/OneNetLibrary/27897/documents/Initiatives/HumanTrafficking/Human-Trafficking-Glossary-of-Terms.pdf>

13. Survive and Thrive Toolkit

https://surviveandthriveadvocacy.org/toolkit/?utm_source=Survive+%26+Thrive+Advocacy+Center+Distribution+List&utm_campaign=ba70f6a446-

[EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_03_09_10_10_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8064cf7c6c-ba70f6a446-438262999&mc_cid=ba70f6a446&mc_eid=85e97ee91b](https://surviveandthriveadvocacy.org/toolkit/?utm_source=Survive+%26+Thrive+Advocacy+Center+Distribution+List&utm_campaign=ba70f6a446-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_03_09_10_10_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8064cf7c6c-ba70f6a446-438262999&mc_cid=ba70f6a446&mc_eid=85e97ee91b)

14. 100 Percent Club to End Human Trafficking started by Atty Gen Ashley Moody Business get trained and report Alliance with other orgs incl FL Alliance to End

HT <https://floridaallianceendht.com/2022/01/17/attorney-general-ashley-moody-starts-the-100-club-to-end-human-trafficking-in-the-state-of-florida/>