

# Human Trafficking in the US and Connecticut

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Jane F. Rodas, Esq.  
International Institute of Connecticut, Inc.



# HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT



**LOOK  
BENEATH  
THE SURFACE**

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS  
MODERN-DAY SLAVERY**

**A victim of trafficking may look like  
many of the patients you see daily.**

All the right questions and hard to solve. The one 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 informational 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.stop.humantrafficking.org](http://www.stop.humantrafficking.org)





# Objectives

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- Is there a problem?
- Recognize trafficking
- Recognize victims
- Certification and Benefits

# Human Trafficking

- Illegal trade in human beings
- After drug dealing, tied with the illegal arms industry as the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest criminal enterprise in the world
- Highly profitable, relatively low risk



# Scope of the Problem

- Approximately 800,000 trafficked across international borders annually
- Believed that 14,000-17,000 trafficked into the US
- 75 - 80% are women and children



# Causes

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- Poverty
- Lack of economic opportunities
- Lack of educational opportunities
- Civil unrest
- Corruption
- Political instability





# Global Markets

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- Young boys have been trafficked for prostitution in such diverse places as Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, and Mexico
- Workers from Indonesia came to US (Long Island) as domestic workers; were subjected to beatings, threats and locked in home
- Thai men were trafficked to the US for labor exploitation and debt bondage
- Romanian girl promised a job as a housekeeper in UK was forced into prostitution
- Indian children trafficked within India have been forced to work in brick kilns

Source: US Dept of State [Trafficking in Persons Report](#) June, 2008

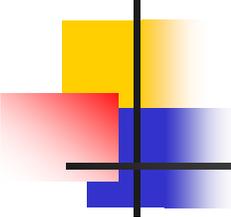
# Trafficking



Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (TVPA),  
enacted October, 2000

“Severe form of trafficking in persons” is defined as

- Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud and coercion (not required if victim under 18), or
- 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.



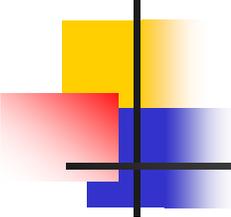
# Common Factors

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- In both labor and sex context, traffickers exploit and enslave human beings
- Use physical and psychological methods of power and control
- Isolation/intimidation; instill fear and dependence
- Movement is not necessary

“People become completely disposable tools for making money.”

Kevin Bales in Disposable People

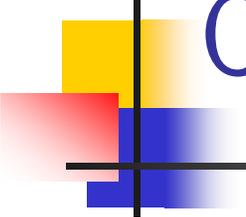


# Focus of TVPA

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- Prevention
  - Public awareness and education
- Protection
  - Victims, not criminals
  - Certification, benefits, T Visa
- Prosecution
  - New federal crime
  - New law enforcement initiatives

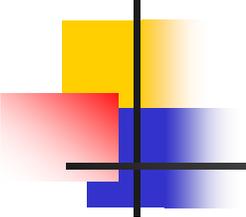




# Conn. Gen. Statutes 53a-192a

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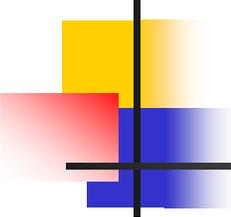
- Section 53a-192a makes trafficking in persons a felony in Connecticut.
- A person is guilty of trafficking when:
  - they use coercion to compel or induce another to engage in prostitution or work



# What Puts Connecticut at Risk

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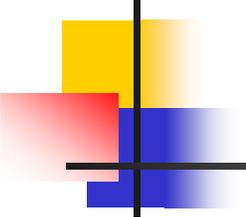
- Proximity to major metropolitan areas - New York City and Boston
- 2 interstate highways between those cities
- An international airport
- 3 marine ports on Long Island Sound
- Industries exist in CT that can give rise to trafficking



# Trafficking-Primary Elements

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- **Force**- beatings, rape, torture
- **Fraud** – false promises, blackmail
- **Coercion** – threats of harm to victim or family; abuse of legal process, debt bondage
  
- Crime against the person, violation of human rights



# Smuggling vs. Trafficking

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## Smuggling

- An offense against the integrity of the U.S. borders
- Requires illegal crossing of the U.S. border
- Smugglers typically make their money once the alien has reached the U.S. border; their “business relationship” with the immigrant then terminates
- Can become trafficking if a person is forced to provide labor or services

## Trafficking

- An offense against a person
- Involves compelled/forced labor or service
- Traffickers may use smuggling debt as a means to control victims
- Traffickers maintain ongoing control over victims, even after the border is crossed

# Domestic Trafficking

- Nothing in the TVPA requires that person cross a border or be of foreign birth
- Domestic sex trafficking involves actions that meet statutory definitions
- Law enforcement prosecuting domestic pimps of minor US citizen girls



# Where Are Victims?

- Brothels/strip clubs/massage parlors
- Restaurants/hotels
- Neighborhoods, as Housekeepers/nannies
- Farms, as Migrant agricultural workers
- Factories
- Landscaping/Construction worksites

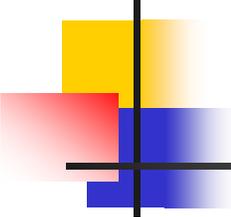


# Identification



- More difficult than you would think
- Reluctance to open up
- Not everyone in economic or sexually exploitive situation is trafficked

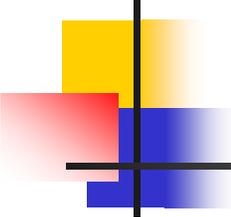




# Barriers for Victims

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- Afraid of law enforcement, of anyone in authority; fear of unknown
- Reluctance to stray from rehearsed stories that were given
- Cultural/religious backgrounds that create barriers
- Fear for families or fear that families will learn of what they are doing
- Empathy/emotional dependence on traffickers
- Feelings of embarrassment/complicity in actions; do not see themselves as victims
- Language barriers/Communication through interpreter



# Child Victims

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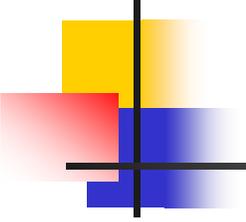
- Will rarely, if ever, self-identify
- Often kidnapped or smuggled into US
- Often prevented from going to school
- Reluctant to trust or open up
- May be eligible for federally funded specialized services
- Working with DCF to iron out protocols

# Traffickers Exert Control

## Physical Abuse

- Beatings
- Forced drug/alcohol use
- Forced abortions
- Hard labor
- Burns



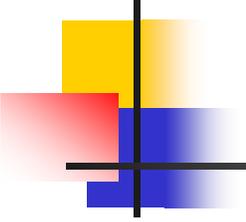


# Traffickers Exert Control

## Sexual Abuse

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- Rape
- Gang Rape
- Absence of Protection
- Photographing or video of activities

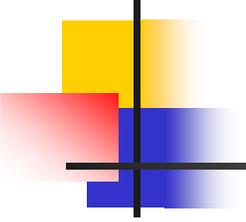


# Traffickers Exert Control

## Psychological Abuse

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- Threats of arrest and deportation
- Imposition of debt
- Threats of violence to self and family
- Embarrassment and shame
- Actions controlled and watched
- Seizing ID and travel documents



# Traffickers Exert Control

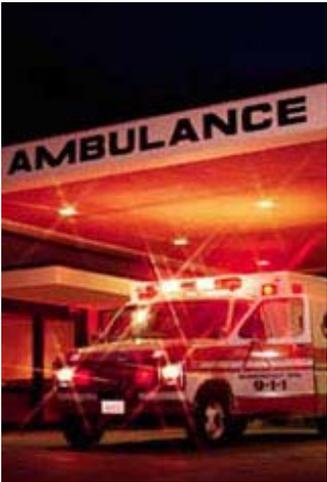
## Social Isolation

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- Prohibiting or restricting contact with friends and family
- No access to media, phone, mail
- Unfamiliar surrounding/constant movement
- Language barriers

# Physical Health

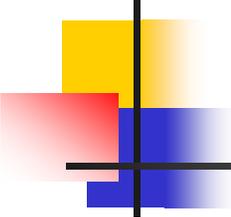
- Sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, pelvic pain, rectal trauma and urinary difficulties
- Unwanted pregnancy or infertility
- Infections or mutilations due to unsanitary/dangerous/unskilled medical procedures
- Chronic back, hearing, eye, cardiovascular or respiratory problems due to excessive and unsafe working conditions
- Dental issues



# Mental Health



- Trauma from daily mental and/or physical abuse
- Depression, stress-related disorders, disorientation, phobias, panic attacks
- Feelings of helplessness, shame, humiliation, shock or denial
- Substance abuse or addictions



# Communicating with Victims

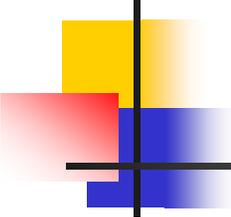
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- Separate victim from person accompanying him/her without raising suspicions
- Use trusted interpreter who is not affiliated with trafficker
- Interview in safe, confidential and trusting environment
- Direct questions may not be effective because person does not see herself as “victim”

# Factors to Look For

- Evidence of being controlled
- Evidence of inability to leave job
- Bruises or signs of battering
- Fear or depression or shame
- Evidence of isolation
- Non-English speaking
- Recent arrival to US
- Lack of identifying documents

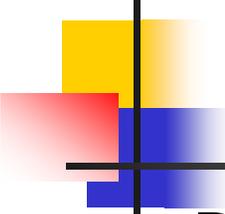




# Lines of Inquiry

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- Promises made about job prior to arrival
- Work requirements and working conditions
- Money owed to employer/anyone else
- Living arrangements- where, who pays rent
- Deprivation of food, water, sleep, medical care
- Freedom of movement- locks on windows/doors
- Contact with family or friends
- Threats/physical violence
- Immigration status- how /when did they arrive in US
- Location of ID/travel documents

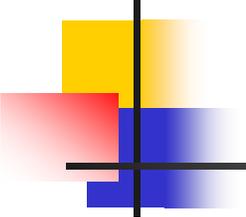


# What You Can Do

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- Be aware the problem exists
- Educate yourself and others
- Know your community resources
- Develop protocols within the department
- If you think trafficking is occurring, call your local Law Enforcement Agency, the State Anti-Trafficking Taskforce, the National Hotline, or our office

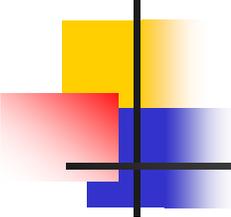
**Breaking  
the Silence**



# Resources

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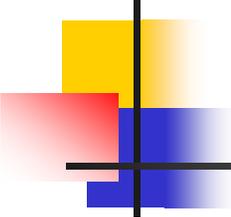
- ❖ National Anti-Trafficking Hotline  
888-373-7888
- ❖ CT State Police Human Trafficking Taskforce  
203-238-6550
- ❖ International Institute of Connecticut, Inc.  
Project Rescue & Assist New Americans  
203-336-0141 [projrescue@iiconn.org](mailto:projrescue@iiconn.org)
- ❖ Campaign to Rescue and Restore  
Free Materials for distribution  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking)



# Certification

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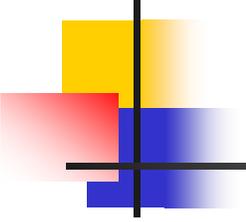
- Non-citizen trafficking victims can get access to benefits from which they would otherwise be barred; treated as refugees
- Comes through ORR of Health & Human Services
- Through FY 2007, ORR had certified 1,379 victims from 77 countries
- Certifications in FY 2007- 270 adult victims, 33 minors; 30% male; from 50 countries; 63% labor trafficking (US State Dept TIPS Report 2008)



# Benefits

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- Work authorization documents-  
provides ability to work legally
- Access to public benefits that would  
be available to a refugee



# Certification = Refugee Benefits

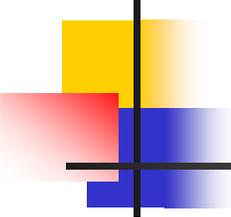
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- Social security card
- Refugee Medical Assistance
- Refugee Cash Assistance
- Food Stamps
- Job Corps/OneStop Career Programs
- TANF
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Public Housing
- Health Screening
- Match Grant

For more info, visit the ORR website at:  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/index.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/index.htm)

State specific programs

[www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/orr/partners/coordina1.htm](http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/orr/partners/coordina1.htm)



# T-Visa

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- New visa created under TVPA; shift in immigration policy. Previously treated as illegal aliens who were deported
- Allows foreign victims to obtain legal status in US – valid for 4 years
- After 3 years, can apply for adjustment of status to lawful permanent resident
- Can petition to have spouse and children accompany

# Eligibility for T-Visa

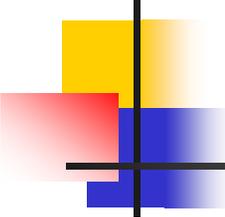


- Need to be victim of severe form of trafficking
- Who is physically present
- Complied with request for assistance if over 18
- Extreme hardship if removed

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Annual limit of 5000 T-Visas

Through FY 2007, just over 1000 T-Visas issued to survivors and approximately 900 T-visas issued to members of families since the enactment of TVPA- In 2007, 279 T Visas and 261 T Visas for immediate family members were issued by USCIS



# Thank you

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Jane F. Rodas

International Institute of Connecticut, Inc.

203-336-0141

[projrescue@iiconn.org](mailto:projrescue@iiconn.org)



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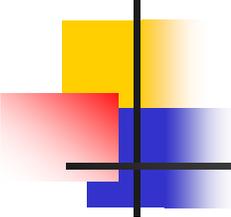
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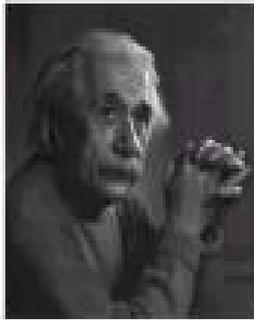




# A Closing Thought

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“The World is a dangerous  
place to live, not because of the  
people who are evil,  
but because of people who won't do  
anything about it...”



*Albert Einstein*