

## Runaway and Homeless Youth Training & Technical Assistance Center

What Can Runaway and Homeless Youth  
(RHY) Programs Do To Identify and Prevent  
Labor Trafficking Among RHY?

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## OBJECTIVES

In this training, participants will be able to...

- Explain the legal definition of labor trafficking
- Identify most common “types” of labor trafficking victimization
- Identify vulnerabilities among foreign national and domestic populations
- Utilize QYIT screening/assessment tool to identify labor trafficking victims
- Adapt current programming to better prevent labor trafficking

# FEDERAL DEFINITION OF TRAFFICKING

**Labor trafficking** is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of **force, fraud, or coercion** for the purposes of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery. (22 USC § 7102)

**Sex trafficking** is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the 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** (22 USC § 7102).

# FORCE

“Power, violence, compulsion, or constraint exerted upon or against a person or thing. Power dynamically considered, that is, in motion or in action; constraining power, compulsion; strength directed to an end.”<sup>1</sup>





# FRAUD

“ A false representation of a matter of fact – whether by words or by conduct, by false or misleading allegations, or by concealment of what should have been disclosed – that deceived and is intended to deceive so that the individual will act upon it to her or his legal injury.”<sup>2</sup>



# COERCION

“The intimidation of a victim to compel the individual to do some act against his or her will by the use of psychological pressure, physical force, or threats. The crime of intentionally and unlawfully restraining another’s freedom by threatening to commit a crime, accusing the victim of a crime, disclosing any secret that would seriously impair the victim’s reputation in the community, or by performing or refusing to perform an official action lawfully requested by the victim, or by causing an official to do so.”<sup>3</sup>

# WHAT DO FORCE, FRAUD, AND COERCION LOOK LIKE?

- Lack of mobility
- Debt bondage
- Document confiscation
- Recruitment fraud
- Lack of payment
- Threats of deportation
- Labor camp conditions
- Employee surveillance
- Physical/sexual abuse
- Threats of violence or retribution
- Long hours without reprieve
- **Inability to walk away**

# TOP METHODS OF FORCE, FRAUD, AND COERCION IN LABOR TRAFFICKING CASES REPORTED TO THE NATIONAL HOTLINE IN 2019

1. Withholds Pay/Earnings
2. Excessive Working Hours
3. Threat to Report to Immigration
4. Verbal Abuse
5. Withholds/Denies Needs<sup>5</sup>



# TOP **TYPES** OF LABOR TRAFFICKING REPORTED TO THE NATIONAL HOTLINE IN 2019

1. Domestic Work
2. Agriculture and Animal Husbandry
3. Traveling Sales Crews<sup>6</sup>



# OTHER TYPES/SITES OF LABOR TRAFFICKING

- Restaurant and Food Service
  - Peddling and Begging
  - Construction
  - Hotels and Hospitality
  - Landscaping
  - Illicit Activities (i.e., drug dealing)
- 
- Health and Beauty Services (salons)
  - Arts and Entertainment
  - Commercial Cleaning Services
  - Factories and Manufacturing
  - Carnivals
  - Forestry and Logging
  - Health Care
  - Recreational Facilities<sup>7</sup>



# The Intersection: RHY and Human Trafficking

- Health Disparities
- Social Justice
- Poverty
- Environmental
- Mental Health
- Education

**WANT A JOB???**

# FAST MONEY, FALSE PROMISES.

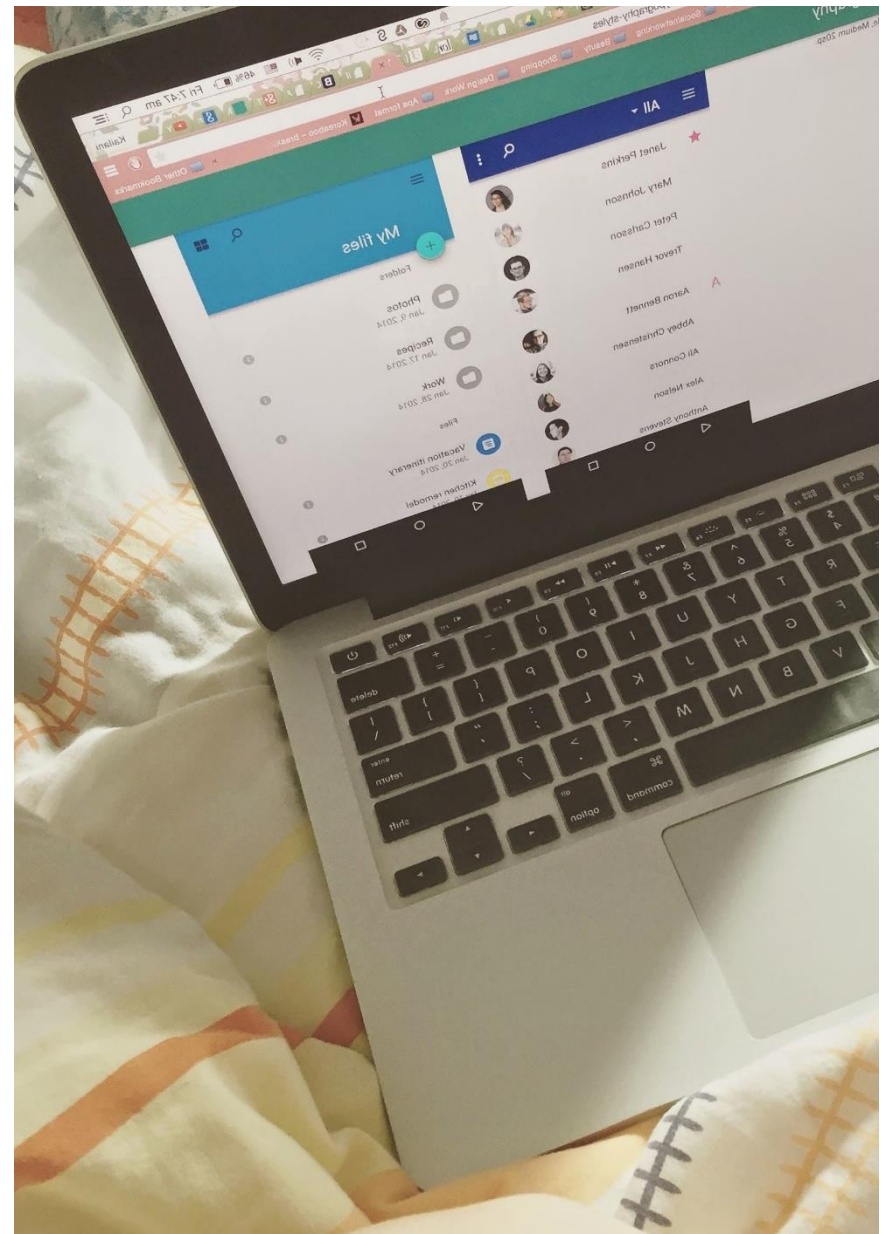
- Job Offer/  
Advertisement
- False Promises/Fraud
- Smuggling Related
- Family
- Posing as a Benefactor<sup>8</sup>





# RECRUITERS TARGET:

- Online
- On social media
- On the street
- At bus stations
- Outside homeless shelters
- At government assistance offices





# FORCED DRUG DEALING

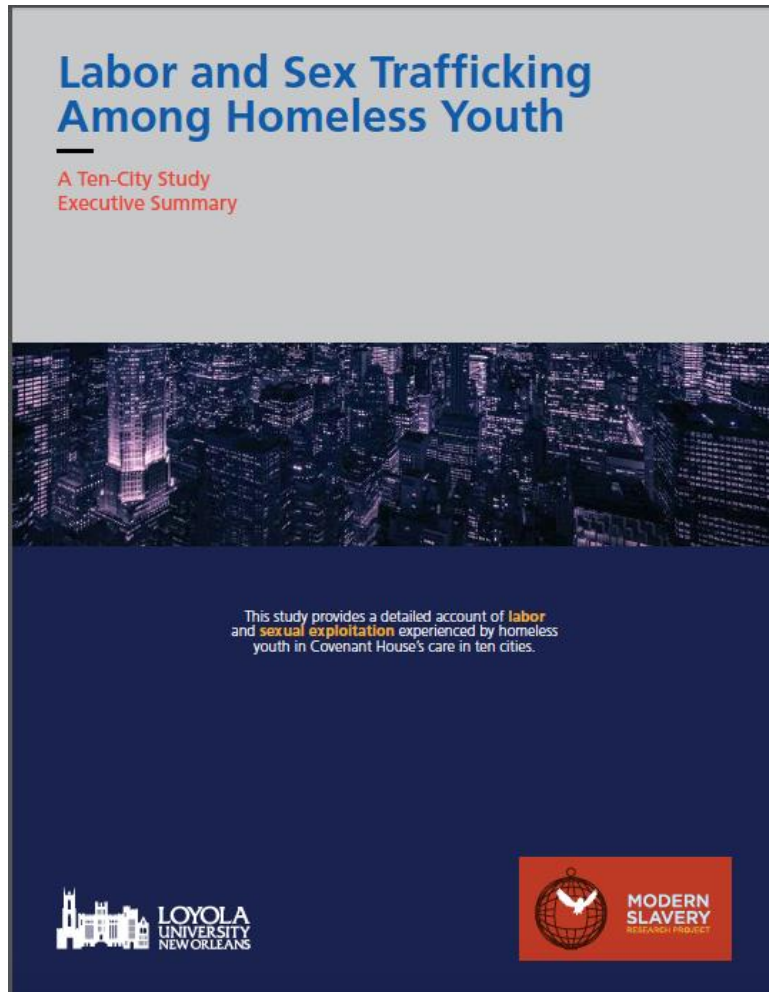


- Requires that there be an element of force, fraud, or coercion
- Often begins when youth are very young or when they are most vulnerable (homeless, death of a family member, extreme poverty)
- Trafficker could be family member or friend or neighbor
- Usually involves threats, implied violence, or acts of violence
- Often youth are unable to leave the situation without undergoing extraordinary violence

“It’s the most **forced labor** out there I want to say. . . . Except for the most extreme ones, like trafficking and stuff like that, but I don’t know. It’s just forced. It’s like a job where you have a schedule and you have to **meet a quota**. You have to sell a certain amount in a certain amount of time or you get **threatened and smacked around** or whatever. . . . When it comes to trafficking and selling drugs, it’s more of a – it’s more **psychological**, not as physical as it used to be I want to say. It’s more like they treat you good, but then there’s times where they **freak out and spaz and they scare you** and stuff, **smack someone else around** in front of you, show that they’re powerful and stuff – **just mentally tell you you can’t go anywhere**. . . . I’ve seen it happen to other people where **you can’t get out**, and if you get out, you end up in the hospital for a while. And then once you’re out of the hospital, you end up back in until you go back and work. Yeah, I’ve seen that lots.”

L. MURPHY “LABOR AND SEX TRAFFICKING  
AMONG HOMELESS YOUTH: A TEN-CITY STUDY,” 2017.

# LABOR TRAFFICKING AMONG HOMELESS YOUTH

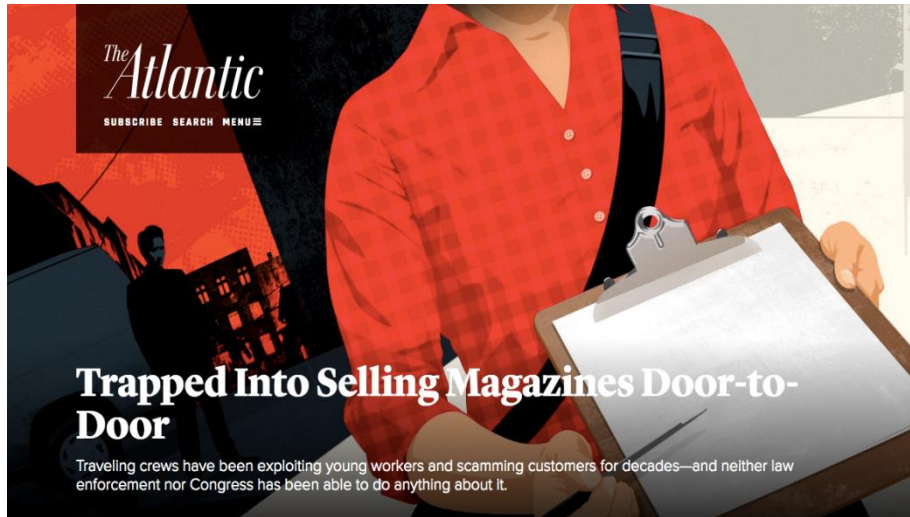


81%

of all labor trafficking victims had been forced to work in the drug trade

L. MURPHY "LABOR AND SEX TRAFFICKING AMONG HOMELESS YOUTH: A TEN-CITY STUDY," 2017.

# Traveling Sales Crews



- Typically somewhat older youth
- Preys on desire for employment, fast money, and belonging
- Often employs pyramid-scheme incentive structures
- Fraudulent promises and contracts
- Power maintained through debt bondage schemes
- Youth are often abandoned when they are no longer needed for the crew

# SCAM JOB POSTING

[◀ prev](#)   [▲](#)   [next ▶](#)

## ★ Get Paid To Give Away Free Cellphones (New Orleans and Surrounding Area)

Searching for HARD WORKING, RESPONSIBLE people to distribute free cellphones in New Orleans and the surrounding area. We represent a company that has a contract with the government to hand out free cellphones to people on public assistance (food stamps, medicaid, etc.). We target low income areas where public assistance is predominant. This is a commission position. We are searching for just a couple of people who have some computer knowledge, transportation, enjoy working outdoors and have a STRONG DESIRE to make a VERY GOOD INCOME. Give away 10 phones per day for 5 days and make \$500.00 for the week....give away 15 phones per day for 5 days and make \$750.00 for the week...give away 20 phones per day for 5 days and make \$1000.00 for the week. Please, only respond to this ad if you can commit to 40 hours a week or more and can pass a background check and drug test. Call 5 zero 2, six 3 nine, 9 six 6 eight.

compensation: **Commission**

employment type: **contract**

- Principals only. Recruiters, please don't contact this job poster.
- do NOT contact us with unsolicited services or offers



# 91%

of youth reported being offered lucrative work opportunities that turned out to be fraudulent, scams, or sex trafficking.

L. MURPHY "LABOR AND SEX TRAFFICKING AMONG HOMELESS YOUTH: A TEN-CITY STUDY," 2017.



# HOW CAN WE IDENTIFY LABOR TRAFFICKING?

## THE QUICK YOUTH INDICATOR TOOL

- Researchers Makini Chisolm-Straker, Julia Einbond, Jeremy Sze, and James White modified the HTIAM-14 screening tool
- Developed the four-question Quick Youth Indicators for Trafficking (QYIT) screening tool
- Useful for adults and youth
- Able to be used by non-expert staff (as yes/no screening) as well as trained social workers (as longer form assessment)

# Have you ever had a job that would be considered unsafe or dangerous?

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adapted from the QYIT discussed in Chisholm-Straker, Einbond, Sze, and White,  
“Recognizing Human Trafficking Among Homeless Youth.”

**Have you ever felt that an employer or boss was trying to trick or force you into work against your will?**

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**Have you ever had an employer who asked you to lie while speaking to others about the work you do?**

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**Have you ever received anything of value in exchange for sex?**

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# Has anyone ever offered you a job that seemed too good to be true?

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\*\*additional useful question, not included in QYIT



# WHERE SHOULD WE BE ASKING THESE QUESTIONS?

- Intake
- Case Management
- Job Skills Training
- Job Search Assistance
- Over lunch...

# A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH TO LABOR TRAFFICKING

- Avoid stigmatization
- Treat as victimization not criminality, even in context of illicit activity
- Recognize anxieties about immigration status
- Recognize potential for return to trafficking situation
- Contextualize other victimization (assault, domestic violence, etc.)
- Treat for trauma, not only labor rights or compensation
- Treat victims as *whole people*
  - Other tips....?

# CASE STUDY – JASON

Jason is a 20-year-old male.

- History of child abuse
- His mother's untimely death
- Homeless
- Wants to talk about finding a job
- Sleeping on the streets
- Afraid of spending another night alone

He has recently worked for a traveling sales crew that sold a lawn service. He is angry because he didn't make the kind of money they promised, but he doesn't think there is anything he can do about it.

## CASE STUDY – JASON

What questions would you ask Jason after hearing this story?

## CASE STUDY – JASON

What are some signs of force, fraud, or coercion that you might look out for?

## CASE STUDY - JASON

What would you do to assist him?



## CASE STUDY - JASON

What could we have done to prevent it from happening in the first place?



**MODERN  
SLAVERY**  
RESEARCH PROJECT



Jobs



Education



Caring  
Support



we asked participants for recommendations they would give to organizations and communities that wanted to improve their identification of and response to people who had similar experiences to those they described – essentially, we asked them **HOW CAN WE MAKE ESCAPE POSSIBLE?**



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Outreach



Identification



Intervention



Family & Youth  
Services Bureau

Runaway and Homeless Youth  
Training & Technical Assistance Center

# prevention

training is key:

- job search safety training
- job skills programs
- healthy sexuality/relationships
- financial management/housing

## outreach

reach out to clients where exploiters do:

- social media
- job listing sites
- at bus stops/stations
- government assistance offices

# **inclusive identification**

if you never ask, you'll never know:

- low-stakes intake
- inclusive identification
- confidentiality
- where? orientation, counseling, job center

# specialized intervention

protect them when they are with you  
*and* when they are not:

- drop-in programs
- victim relocation networks
- safety planning and harm reduction
- trauma-informed counseling



# how can our community “make escape possible”?

## prevention

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# References

1. Shirelle Phelps and Jeffrey Lehman, eds., *West's Encyclopedia of American Law*, [Detroit, Thomson/Gale, 2004].
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7. Polaris, *The Typology of Modern Slavery: Defining Sex and Labor Trafficking the United States* (Washington, DC: Author, 2017).
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10. Polaris, *The Typology of Modern Slavery: Defining Sex and Labor Trafficking the United States* (Washington, DC: Author, 2017)