

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN PRIORITY ISSUE: HUMAN TRAFFICKING

“I AM A SURVIVOR, NOT A VICTIM.”

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery and is the second largest criminal industry in the world. The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons defines human trafficking as the recruiting, transporting and harboring of persons by use of threat, force or deception for the purpose of exploitation. Traffickers take advantage of vulnerable persons with false promises or physical abduction, forcing them into contract slavery, forced labor and sexual trafficking.

STATISTICS

According to the U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report 2015, the number of adults and children currently in forced labor, bonded labor and forced prostitution is 20.9 million. Worldwide, 3 per 1,000 people are victims of human trafficking.

WHY IT HAPPENS

Our current global economic system continues to reward wealth and exploit the poor. Seventy percent of the world's poor are women and girls, most of whom live in developing countries with limited options available. Women make up 55 percent of the 20.9 million trafficked adults and children, according to the Trafficking in Persons Report.

WHERE CAN TRAFFICKED PERSONS BE FOUND?

Trafficked men and women can be found in all types of establishments and locations, in rural, suburban and urban settings in the United States and worldwide. They are landscaping and agricultural workers, panhandlers, day laborers, factory and sweatshop workers, hotel workers and housekeepers. They are exploited by the service industries in restaurants, bars, strip clubs, nail salons and similar businesses, and on websites for adult services. Prostitutes, strippers, escorts and workers in massage parlors, brothels and for phone chat lines are often victims.



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WHY HELP?

The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2012

United Methodists “deplore all forms of the commercialization and exploitation of sex, with their consequent cheapening and degradation of human personality. To lose freedom and be sold by someone else for sexual purposes is a form of slavery, and we denounce such business and support the abused and their right to freedom. We call for strict global enforcement of laws prohibiting the sexual exploitation or use of children by adults and encourage efforts to hold perpetrators legally and financially responsible.” (111-112)

The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church,

“Therefore, The United Methodist Church, through education, financial resources, publication, lobbying, and the use of every relevant gift of God, shall join in the active battle against the modern-day enslavement of humans for commercial sexual exploitation.” (Resolution 6023)

United Methodist Women Social Policy Statement on Human Trafficking

“Human trafficking is a crime fueled by global poverty, inadequate education and opportunity, ethnic discrimination and societal inequity between men and women and by the demand for cheap labor and cheap sex. It is a crime that transcends cultures, class and geography.”

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HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Host an education forum to help educate others on the realities of human trafficking. Call the United Methodist Women Washington Office of Public Policy at 202-488-5660 to be connected to a human trafficking team member who can help. Invite local law enforcement agencies, friends and other faith-based and humanitarian groups to your program.
- Advocate for the passage of a safe harbor law in your state.
- Download the United Methodist Women’s Human Trafficking report at <http://ow.ly/T1VC7>
- Contact your local law enforcement agency about human trafficking in your community. Tell us what you learn by emailing csadc@unitedmethodistwomen.org.
- Stay informed. Be watchful. Who picked the food you are eating, sewed your clothes, prepared the food or washed the dishes in your local restaurant, cut your grass?
- This crime cannot be solved without partnering with other women’s advocacy organizations.

For immediate help, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-3737-888. You can also call the National Runaway Safeline at 1-800-RUNAWAY or the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE. Report possible trafficking to local authorities and the **U.S. Department of Justice** at 1-888-428-7581. Victims don’t usually identify themselves.

For more ways to help, visit the United Methodist Women website: www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/act,

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