



Human Trafficking Myths vs Reality – Six Most Common Myths

1. **Myth: Aren't most trafficking victims are kidnapped & held captive?**

Reality: By far the most pervasive myth about human trafficking is that it always - or often - involves kidnapping or otherwise physically forcing someone into a situation. Most human traffickers use psychological means such as tricking, defrauding, manipulating or threatening victims into providing commercial sex or exploitative labor.

2. **Myth: Only undocumented foreign nationals get trafficked in the United States.**

Reality: Polaris has worked on thousands of cases of trafficking involving foreign national survivors who are legally living and/or working in the United States. These include survivors of both sex and labor trafficking.

3. **Myth: Does human trafficking only happen in illegal or underground industries?**

Reality: Human labor trafficking cases have been reported and prosecuted in industries including restaurants, cleaning services, construction, factories and more.

4. **Myth: Only women and girls can be victims and survivors of sex trafficking**

Reality: One study estimates that as many as half of sex trafficking victims and survivors are male. [Advocates believe that percentage may be even higher](#) but that male victims are far less likely to be identified. LGBTQ boys and young men are seen as particularly vulnerable to trafficking.

5. **Myth: Human trafficking involves moving, traveling, or transporting a person across borders in other countries**

Reality: Human trafficking is often confused with human smuggling, which involves illegal border crossings. In fact, the crime of human trafficking does not require any movement whatsoever. Survivors can be recruited and trafficked in their own hometowns, even their own homes.

6. **Myth: Don't some girls choose to be there?**

Reality: Choosing commercial sex is a choiceless choice. Most prostituted individuals "choose" to enter prostitution because of poverty, homelessness, drug addiction, domestic or childhood abuse and other traumatic hardships that remove safe choices.

Resources:

Rebecca bender –Trafficking Truths e-course - <https://rebecca-bender.mykajabi.com/trafficking-truths>

Villanova School of Law Institute to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation Myth Busters social media campaign - <https://www.facebook.com/VillanovaCSEInstitute/photos/a.162159244150293/1164861763880031/>

National Human Trafficking Hotline Myths & Facts | National Human Trafficking Hotline