

# Sex Trafficking in the U.S.: A Closer Look at U.S. Citizen Victims

## Overview

*“You will do anything to feel like his everything. And he promises you everything. And the things he convinces you to do, they don’t seem that bad if afterwards he shows you how much he loves you.... And as long as your profits meet expectations, you will have what you’ve wanted your whole life: Love.”*  
 – from the spoken word poem, “America’s Daughters,” written by a Polaris client<sup>1</sup>

The International Labor Organization estimates that there are 4.5 million victims of sex trafficking worldwide.<sup>2</sup> While the prevalence of sex trafficking in the United States is still unknown, we do know that women, children, and men are being sold for sex against their will in cities and towns in all 50 states. A shocking number of these victims are citizens of the United States. In 2014, the Urban Institute studied the underground commercial sex economy in eight U.S. cities and estimated that this illicit activity generated between \$39.9 million and \$290 million in revenue depending on the city.<sup>3</sup> According to the study, pimps in one city earned an average of \$32,833 per week. It is within this economy that sex trafficking thrives, and with this potential for earnings, sex trafficking is considered a low-risk, high-reward endeavor.

The situations that sex trafficking victims face vary dramatically. Many victims become romantically involved with someone who then forces or manipulates them into prostitution. Others are lured in with false promises of a job, such as modeling or dancing. Some are forced to sell sex by their parents or other family members. They may be involved in a trafficking situation for a few days or weeks, or may remain in the same trafficking situation for years.

These people can become trapped and may fear leaving for myriad reasons. These include psychological trauma, shame, emotional attachment to the pimp, drug addiction, or physical threats to themselves or their children’s safety. Under federal law, if these individuals are performing commercial sex through force, fraud, or coercion, or are induced into commercial sex while under the age of 18, they are victims of sex trafficking.<sup>4</sup>

While communities have begun to build better responses to the needs of this vulnerable population, services are still desperately needed to help the women, girls, men, and boys who often lack access to services and help. We must also look at what is necessary to disrupt trafficking networks to prevent people from becoming victims in the first place.

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Polaris has identified nearly 6,000 sex trafficking cases involving U.S. citizen survivors through operating the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) hotline and the BeFree Textline, and through providing long-term services and case management to survivors of human trafficking in Washington, DC and New Jersey. In the process, we have learned a great deal about what makes people vulnerable to recruitment by pimps, the locations where they are forced to sell sex, how their traffickers control them, and their level of access to opportunities for assistance.

We hope that this information will help communities better understand how traffickers operate so that we can put them out of business, keep them from harming more people, and help survivors find the services they need.

## Methodology

The data in this report is based on information about sex trafficking cases involving U.S. citizen victims which was provided to the NHTRC, BeFree Textline, or Polaris's Client Services staff. In 2014, the NHTRC and BeFree received reports of 1,611 potential sex trafficking situations involving U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents.<sup>5</sup> These cases offer general information about the nature of sex trafficking. In addition, Polaris analyzed accounts from 292 survivors who directly contacted the NHTRC or BeFree Textline in 2014 and provided more detailed information about their experiences. These accounts supplement the information collected from 141 U.S. citizen sex trafficking survivors who began receiving services from our social services offices between 2011 and 2014.

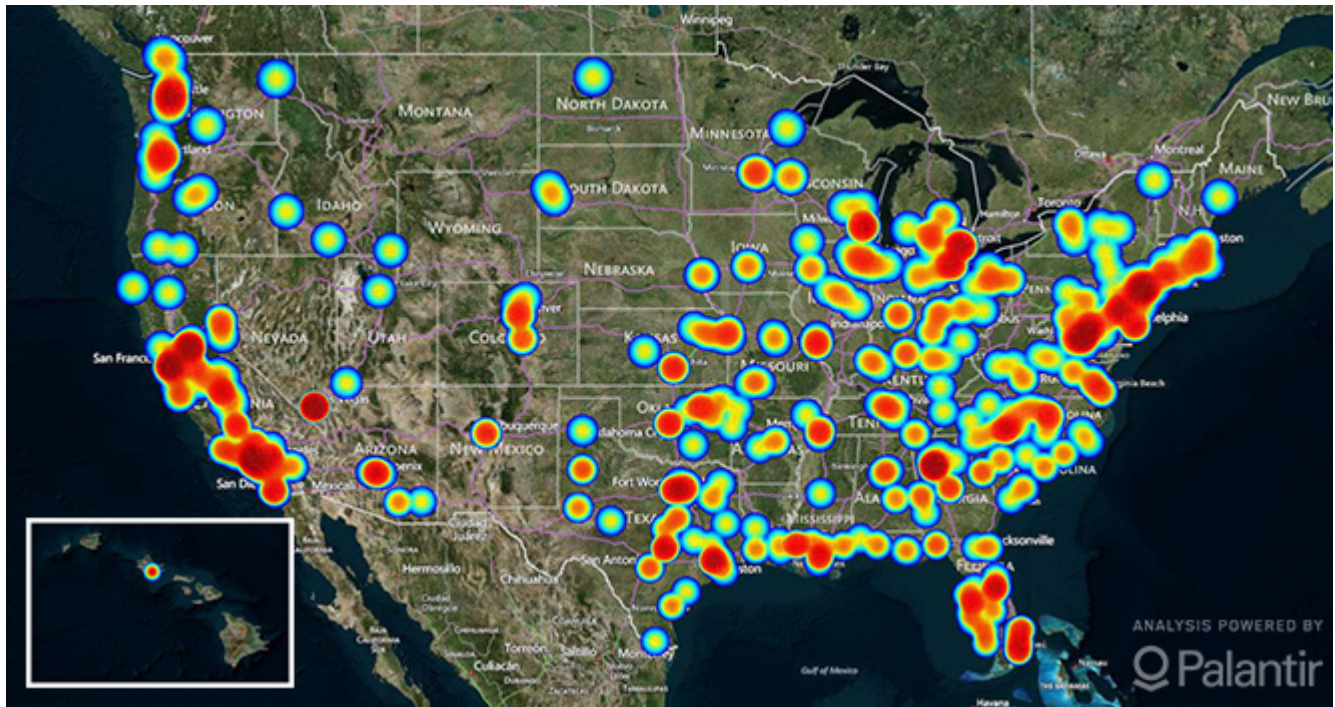
The information contained in this document was obtained through Polaris's regular interactions with survivors through the NHTRC hotline, BeFree Textline, and Polaris's direct Client Services programs and is not the result of a systematic survey. As survivors told their stories, Polaris staff noted key elements of each account and this information provided the basis for this document. Individuals contacting the NHTRC and BeFree Textline were asked to share only as much information as they were comfortable providing, and Polaris and the NHTRC have public statements about how information collected is used. Similarly, Client Services staff explained to every client that general, non-identifying information they provided may be shared for educational purposes. Clients who were not

fluent in English were provided this information by an interpreter who was fluent in the client's native language. Polaris's clients and individuals contacting the NHTRC and BeFree Textline can decline to provide any piece of information and we will still serve them to the best of our ability. (Please see Appendix on p. 10 for more information on our privacy policies.)

The NHTRC, Polaris BeFree Textline, and Polaris Client Services programs are not research-oriented programs. Instead, the staff of these programs are focused on helping trafficking survivors obtain security and achieve success. Because of this, survivors were not asked a set of standardized questions and only provided information that was deemed relevant to their interactions with Polaris staff. As such, the data points in this document represent only the number of survivors who chose to disclose a particular piece of information and should not be considered a comprehensive statement on the total number of survivors who qualify for a particular category. The number of survivors who disclosed specific pieces of information would likely have been significantly higher if Polaris staff had systematically asked a standardized set of questions to each survivor. The statistics presented in this document cannot be compared to the findings of more academic studies which included systematic studies. Our analysis focused on key elements of experience which Polaris has historically found to be significant in trafficking situations. Additionally, Polaris is unable to authenticate details of survivor accounts.

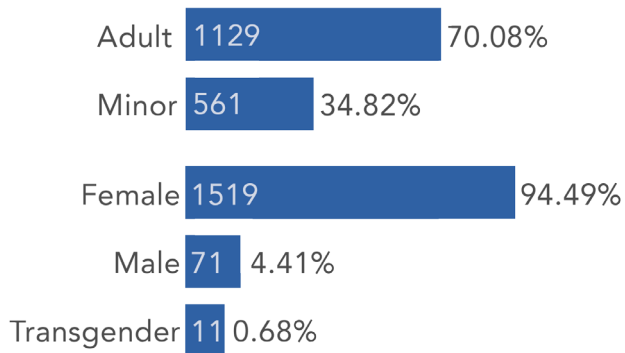
Despite these limitations, the information garnered from the stories of these survivors provides context and insight into the realities of sex trafficking in America. While not exhaustive in scope, the inclusion of particular details within a survivor's account indicates the elements of experiences considered most significant to that survivor and are important for informing policy, service provision, prevention campaigns, and disruption activities. This document is an opportunity to amplify the voices of survivors, both those who are comfortable with speaking publicly or with researchers and those who prefer to engage only with service providers.

**Figure 1: Location of Sex Trafficking Cases involving U.S. Citizens Reported to NHTRC and BeFree (2014)**

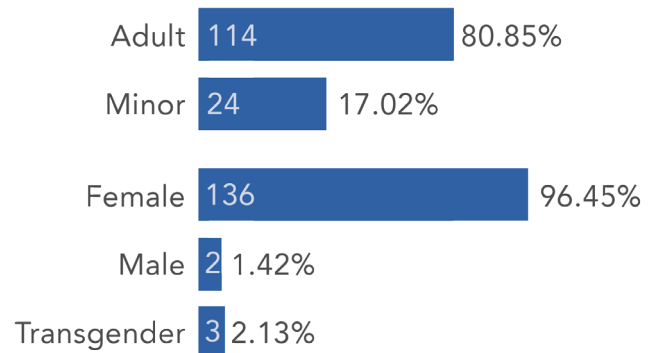


\*This map only reflects cases in which the location of the potential trafficking was known. Some cases may involve more than one location and are not reflected in this map.

**Figure 2: Survivor Demographics (NHTRC and BeFree Textline U.S. Citizen Sex Trafficking Cases)\*; N=1,611**



**Figure 3: Survivor Demographics (Polaris Client Services U.S. Citizen Sex Trafficking Cases); N=141**



\*These statistics are non-cumulative. Cases may involve multiple victims and include female, male, and transgender individuals, foreign nationals and U.S. citizens, adults and minors. In some cases, demographic information is not reported. This table shows the number of cases referencing trafficking in which the labeled populations were involved, not the total number of individuals involved in the trafficking situations.



## Recruiting the Vulnerable

*“Brittany met a man at her local mall who offered her a job at his restaurant. Instead of working as a waitress, Brittany was forced to sell sex in a hotel room.”*

– from *Polaris Survivor Stories*

Traffickers profit from finding and recruiting people to exploit. Often, traffickers identify and leverage their victims’ vulnerabilities in order to create dependency. They make promises aimed at addressing the needs of their target in order to impose control. They may make elaborate promises of a place to live, a job, or gifts of clothing and jewelry. Controllers may also act as romantic pursuers and initially offer love and support in order to gain their victim’s trust. While television and film plots have frequently depicted traffickers as kidnapping their victims and forcing them into prostitution, these situations are rare in comparison to the number of victims recruited through other means.

In speaking with Polaris staff, survivors pointed to sustained unemployment, unpaid debts, and desperation to provide for themselves and their children as major factors in their path to exploitation. Many described the promises made by their controller as their best chance of attaining some level of financial stability. Given the limited economic opportunities available to young people, this was especially true for youth.

Survivors also cited chronic homelessness or lack of stable housing as a particularly significant factor in their susceptibility to the recruitment efforts of their traffickers. Several individuals reported that they were approached or recruited by their controller within days of being evicted or thrown out of their previous residences by a family member. In many instances, these controllers offered to act as a benefactor and provide shelter. Some survivors agreed to engage in sexual services directly in exchange for shelter, leading to exploitative and abusive relationships.

Individuals in need of emotional support are also vulnerable. In many instances, survivors recounted being approached by their controllers soon after experiencing a traumatic loss like the death of a family member, or after exiting an abusive relationship.

### A Note about “Average Age of Entry”

Many people have used a controversial statistic indicating that the average age of entry for girls into prostitution is 12-14. Based on available internal and external data sources, Polaris does not believe this is accurate and encourages researchers to conduct new studies on this topic. Until a more comprehensive and methodical study is completed, the trafficking field has to rely on incomplete and imperfect data drawn from small data sets.

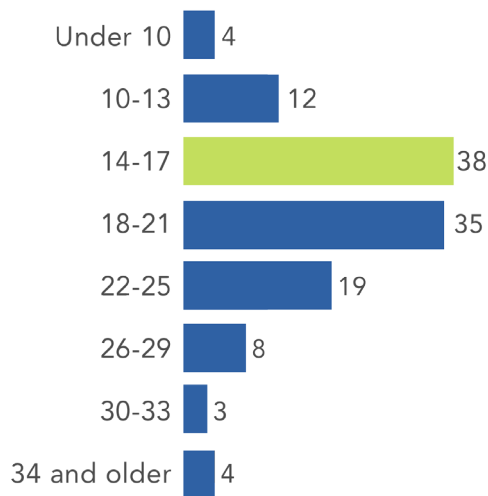
123 of the 292 survivors whose accounts were analyzed disclosed their age when they first engaged in commercial sex to the NHTRC or BeFree Textline. **44% of these survivors estimated that they were 17 or younger, and the average age of first participation was 19 years old.** This information might be affected because more adult victims contact the NHTRC and BeFree than minors. A 2015 Department of Justice funded study which looked at minor domestic sex trafficking victims reported a median age of 15.<sup>6</sup> However, this statistic is similarly skewed, as the study focused exclusively on minors. A larger study which involves equal numbers of minor and adult participants is needed before more conclusive statements can be made.

Many youth who lack supportive home lives said they considered commercial sex as one of their only viable options. Youth who are supported by state agencies, including foster children, children in the juvenile justice system, victims of child abuse and neglect, runaway and homeless youth, and LGBTQ youth estranged from their families, are particularly vulnerable, and may lack other sources of emotional, social, or material support.

A number of survivors disclosed struggling with substance abuse prior to entering their trafficking situation. In these instances, controllers often recruited their victims by offering them drugs. Survivors struggling with addiction also reported being approached during transitional periods, such as recently being discharged from rehabilitation facilities or being evicted from their residence due to their substance use. Survivors also stated that health-related issues including medical and mental health conditions, cognitive impairments, and physical disabilities contributed to their exploitation. These conditions prevented some survivors from maintaining steady employment and financial security. Survivors with health issues referenced challenges accessing health services and prescription medication. These challenges motivated some survivors to accept offers of employment and material benefits.

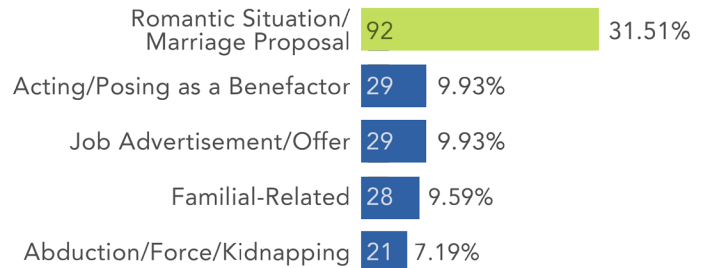
**Figure 4: Estimated Age at Time of First Commercial Sex Act Reported to NHTRC and BeFree Textline by Survivors; N=123**

The data reflects only survivors who elected to disclose this information and is not the result of a systematic survey.



**Figure 5: Recruitment Methods Reported to NHTRC and BeFree Textline by Survivors\*; N=292**

The data reflects only survivors who elected to disclose this information and is not the result of a systematic survey.



\*These statistics are non-cumulative. Survivors may reference multiple recruitment methods or may not provide this type of information.

**Figure 6: Top 10 Risk Factors Reported by Survivors**

The data reflects only survivors who elected to disclose this information and is not the result of a systematic survey.

**Self-Reported to NHTRC and BeFree**

1. Poverty
2. Homelessness
3. Substance Use
4. Sexual Abuse/Assault
5. Child Abuse/Neglect
6. Runaway
7. Youth Involved with the Child Welfare and/or Juvenile Justice System
8. Domestic Violence
9. LGBTQ
10. Mental Health Concerns

**Self-Reported by Polaris Clients**

1. Child Abuse/Neglect
2. Homelessness
3. Runaway
4. Sexual Abuse/Assault
5. Domestic Violence
6. Poverty
7. Youth Involved with the Child Welfare and/or Juvenile Justice System
8. Mental Health Concerns
9. Substance Use
10. Other Type of Trauma

\*Survivors and clients may reference multiple risk factors or may not provide this type of information. This chart provides data about the number of survivors who indicated that these risk factors applied to them prior to the start of their trafficking situation. The variables tracked in this category were selected based on Polaris's knowledge of common risk factors associated with trafficking and are not an exhaustive list of all factors which may make an individual vulnerable to trafficking.

## Controlling the Victim

*“Always make them need and depend on you so you have power over them. (Power is control)”*

- The first of ten handwritten rules from the leader of a prostitution ring, titled “Rules 2 Da Game of Hoes!!!”<sup>7</sup>

Traffickers actively work to break down their victims’ psyche and develop control over them through a combination of intense manipulation, feigned affection, brutal violence, isolation, and/or emotional abuse. Some develop a systematic process to recruit and control multiple victims. Others may take advantage of an existing relationship with the victim, and force their children or their wives or girlfriends into commercial sex.

The complex relationships between survivors and controllers make psychological manipulation a primary means of control. Some survivors reported being married or in romantic relationships with their controller for several years prior to being made to engage in commercial sex. The emotional bond these survivors felt towards their controller was a significant obstacle in leaving the situation. Like victims of domestic violence, many survivors may feel love or a sense of loyalty to their controller due to their familial or romantic ties or because their controller had supported them financially. Controllers who have children with their victims often restrict access to those children or use custody of the children to their advantage as a means of control.

Traffickers also use sexual abuse, other forms of violence, isolation, or confinement to dominate their victims. Many survivors Polaris has worked with described being unable to leave a particular area due to their controller’s constant monitoring. Others discussed more subtle forms of isolation, such as experiencing limited or monitored access to phones or email accounts, or being moved frequently such that they were unable to establish social ties or locate resources in a given community.

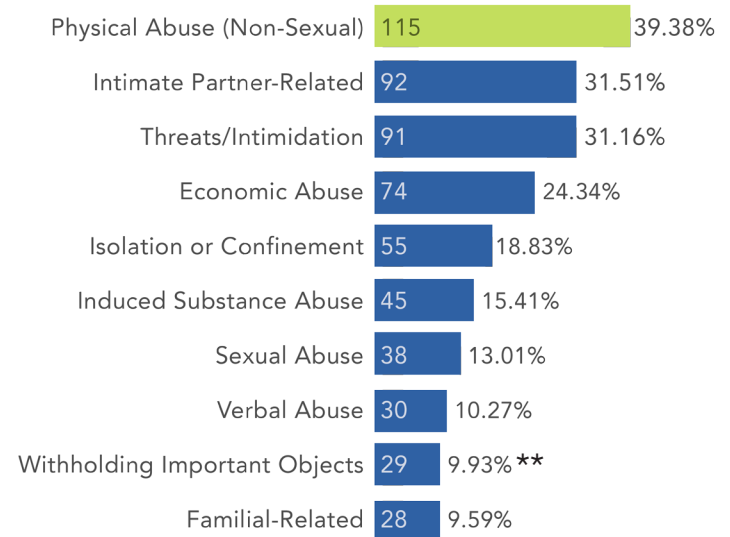
Economic abuse is another frequently cited means of control. Many survivors relayed that their traffickers typically confiscated most or all of their earnings and severely restricted their access to financial resources. This tactic forced the individual to become financially dependent on their controller even to acquire basic necessities. Many who experienced economic abuse stated that their controllers instituted a quota system in

which they had to earn a specific amount of money per night. Quotas varied but typically fell into the \$500 - \$1,500 range per night. Repercussions for not meeting a quota included physical abuse or being denied food or shelter until the quota was met.

Traffickers may supply and then control access to drugs as another way of maintaining obedience. This was reported by survivors who had struggled with substance issues before entering their trafficking situation, as well as by those who had no prior history of substance issues. This tactic made many survivors dependent on the supply of drugs provided by their controllers and added an additional obstacle to leaving. Control of drugs was not limited to illicit substances; some survivors who had serious medical and mental health issues reported that their controller confiscated their prescription medications to use as leverage.

**Figure 7: Control Methods Reported to NHTRC and BeFree Textline by Survivors\*;** N=292

*The data reflects only survivors who elected to disclose this information and is not the result of a systematic survey.*



*\*These statistics are non-cumulative. Survivors may reference multiple methods of control or may not provide this type of information.*

*\*\*Withheld important objects included, but were not limited to, identification documents, prescription medication, and food.*

## Where Sex Trafficking Occurs

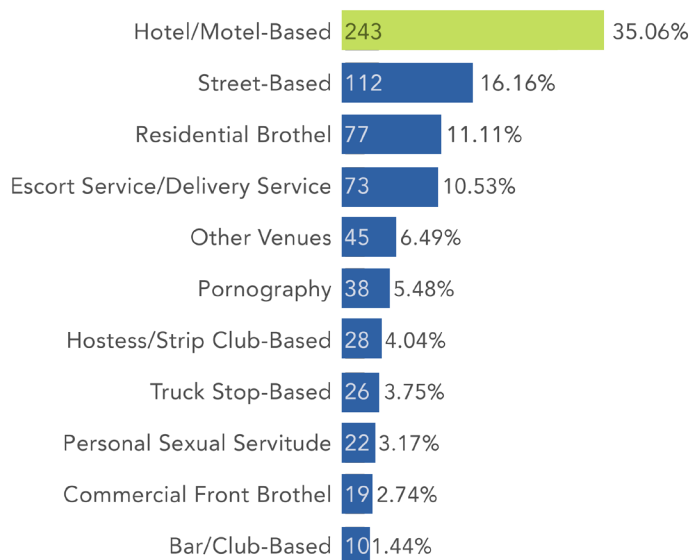
*“In a motel, you could spend more time, and you didn’t have to worry about the police. In a car, you have to be faster. I wanted to stay in the car because I didn’t want to leave the stroll. If I left, I could lose money.”*

- Urban Institute, Estimating the Size and Structure of the Underground Commercial Sex Economy in Eight Major U.S. Cities<sup>8</sup>

Sex trafficking occurs in various venues including solicitation from city streets, truck stops, strip clubs, hotels and motels, residential brothels, through escort services, and elsewhere. Many survivors reported engaging in commercial sex in multiple venues.

The most commonly reported venue for sex trafficking situations involving U.S. citizen victims was hotels and motels. Hotels and motels allow for buyer confidentiality, since buyers can park at and enter these establishments without it being obvious that they are there to purchase sex. Additionally, buyers may believe that these locations are both safer and more private than other venues. These locations also allow traffickers to function without being responsible for facility maintenance, and allow traffickers to move between locations and thus avoid the attention from law enforcement or the public that may come with a permanent location.

**Figure 8: Primary Venue of Commercial Sex Reported to NHTRC and BeFree Textline by Survivors; N=693**



Street-based commercial sex was more commonly reported in urban areas. Many cities have “tracks” or particular blocks or cross-streets known for commercial sex. Commercial sex enterprises operating out of houses, apartments, or trailers are known as residential brothels and exist in rural, suburban, and urban communities.

Escort services are typically more formal businesses ostensibly offering non-sexual services such as companionship, massage, or exotic dancing. However, sex trafficking survivors who experienced exploitation through escort services reported that sexual activity was usually involved and typically occurred at hotels or private residences.

### Sex Trafficking and the Internet

The Internet plays a significant role in both the recruitment of victims and the facilitation of sex trafficking. Traffickers use social media and dating websites to contact potential victims. 8% of the 292 survivors whose accounts were analyzed told the NHTRC or Polaris BeFree Textline that they first met their controller online. However, this kind of information was provided by only a small subset of survivors and questions regarding how individuals were first contacted by their traffickers were not systematically asked.

Traffickers are able to advertise commercial sexual services on websites with relative anonymity. These sites provide an easy and cost-effective way to advertise to a wide selection of customers. Polaris regularly hears from survivors that they were advertised for commercial sex on a number of websites. One website which advertises commercial sex services listed nearly 12,000 ads nationwide for these services on a single day in 2014.

Purchasers of commercial sex use online forums to review their experiences and spread information about how to avoid law enforcement detection. Traffickers may also use the social media posts of victims to monitor their activities or track their location. However, survivors have also successfully used social media sites to reach out for help.

## Victim's Relationship to Trafficker

*"With four children between them and a 16-year relationship, Mari couldn't imagine leaving Darrell. She didn't see any viable options, even though he was physically abusive and forced her into commercial sex when money was tight."*

– from Polaris Survivor Stories

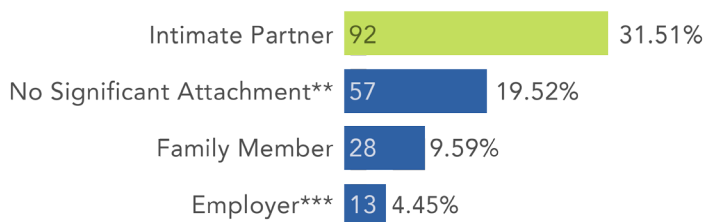
While many survivors may have intense emotional attachments to their controllers, others may view their controller as their employer, their abductor, or consider them exclusively their trafficker.<sup>9</sup>

Survivors most commonly reported being in a romantic relationship with their controller and described complicated power and control dynamics commonly associated with situations of intimate partner violence. In many cases, survivors were legally married to or shared children with their controller and cited these ties as additional complications which prevented them from seeking assistance.

A significant number of survivors disclosed that their controller was a family member. Parents or other relatives in caregiver roles were cited as being controllers, typically when the survivor was a minor. These

### Figure 9: Relationship to Trafficker Reported to NHTRC and BeFree Textline by Survivors\*; N=292

The data reflects only survivors who elected to disclose this information and is not the result of a systematic survey.



\*These statistics are non-cumulative. Survivors may reference multiple traffickers with various relationships or may not provide this type of information.

\*\*This category represents survivors who viewed their trafficker(s) solely as their controller and did not experience any alternative form of attachment to that individual or individuals. This category includes survivors who were abducted by their trafficker(s) and survivors who lacked romantic or familial attachments to or formal contracts with their trafficker(s).

\*\*\*This category was reserved exclusively for survivors who identified having a formal written or verbal contract or business arrangement with their trafficker(s).

controllers used their implicit power as the “guardian” to exploit the minor. Other familial traffickers included uncles, cousins, or siblings. The power dynamics associated with familial trafficking often persisted even as the survivor entered adulthood and obtained greater legal agency.

Survivors who reported working for strip clubs and formal escort agencies were more likely to describe their controller as an employer. Some survivors of formal escort agencies disclosed knowing that they would be engaging in commercial sex from the outset of the situation. However, they reported that the nature of the situation was frequently not what they expected, and survivors reported experiencing debt bondage, blackmail, threats, and sexual abuse that prevented them from leaving the situation.

## Opportunities for Assistance

*"During the time I was on the street, I went to hospitals, urgent care clinics, women's health clinics, and private doctors. No one ever asked me anything anytime I ever went to a clinic."*

– Lauren, survivor<sup>10</sup>

Victims of sex trafficking routinely interacted with people outside their trafficking situations who were in positions to provide assistance. These individuals' ability to identify victims and offer assistance was instrumental in a victim leaving her or his trafficking situation.

Many survivors disclosed having some form of interaction with law enforcement or the criminal justice system while in their trafficking situation. Many of these individuals cited their interaction with law enforcement as the reason they were able to leave their controller. In these cases, the law enforcement agents understood the dynamics of sex trafficking situations and recognized the survivors as victims and not perpetrators of crimes. The law enforcement agents connected them to services which helped to prevent them from returning to their trafficking situations. In addition to arresting the perpetrator(s), some law enforcement agents drove survivors to safe houses, or they called shelters or the NHTRC hotline to advocate on behalf of victims.



Unfortunately, many other survivors reported being arrested for crimes like prostitution or offenses connected to narcotics or domestic violence. Some survivors reported misconduct by law enforcement and mistreatment in custody. Several survivors provided detailed accounts of their attempts to report their controllers to law enforcement, only to be dismissed.

Victims of sex trafficking also frequently came into contact with healthcare providers. These interactions were especially common for survivors who became pregnant while in their trafficking situation and those who were hospitalized after physical and sexual assault incidents. In many cases, hospital social workers were instrumental in assisting these survivors in finding safe housing alternatives which allowed them to leave their controller. While this information was often not disclosed to the NHTRC or BeFree Textline, a 2014 Loyola University of Chicago Law School Report supports the theory that U.S. citizen sex trafficking victims have frequent interactions with healthcare professionals. Of the 98 domestic sex trafficking victims reporting in this survey, 87.8% of them had had some contact with healthcare professionals while in their trafficking situations.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, many individuals who were trafficked as minors had had contact with the child welfare system. Some child welfare case workers were able to identify and assist victims because they had received training and adequate

screening resources for human trafficking. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) reports that one in six endangered runaways reported to them were likely sex trafficking victims and 68% of these likely sex trafficking victims were under the care of social services or in foster care when they ran.<sup>12</sup>

These types of front-line professionals can make a significant difference in the lives of victims of sex trafficking if they receive the training, screening tools, and resources that can help them identify victims and connect them to long-term assistance.

## Conclusion

*“We each have a responsibility to make this horrific and all-too-common crime a lot less common. And our work with victims is the key that will open the door to real change.”*

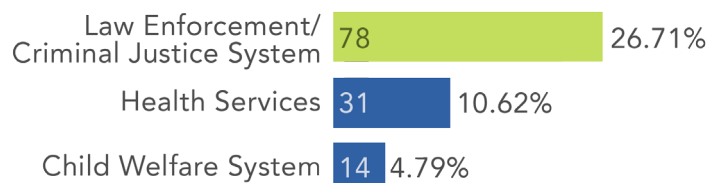
– U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry<sup>13</sup>

Sex trafficking in the United States continues to evolve and adapt to a changing landscape, and it can be hard to identify a single approach that best supports the victims and survivors while eradicating this crime. There is a lack of funding for long-term services that help survivors rebuild their lives and find new opportunities for employment. Victims are still too often arrested instead of given the support they need. Traffickers are still making enormous profits.

However, in the last five years, there has been a groundswell of activities at the local, state, and federal level that is making a difference in combating this issue. Communities across the country have worked to increase services for victims, help survivors find new jobs, strengthen penalties against traffickers, pass new laws, combat the demand for the purchasing of commercial sex, increase training for law enforcement and front-line professionals, develop corporate partnerships, conduct awareness campaigns, and more. As a result, more victims are being identified and connected to services and more traffickers are being stopped.

**Figure 10: Opportunities for Assistance Reported to NHTRC and BeFree Textline by Survivors\*;** N=292

*The data reflects only survivors who elected to disclose this information and is not the result of a systematic survey. Employees of these systems commonly encounter victims of trafficking. The NHTRC and BeFree Textline have noted that being identified by and receiving assistance from these actors is often instrumental in a victim leaving their trafficking situation. This chart provides data about the number of survivors who indicated that they had interacted with these systems while still in their trafficking situation. This included survivors who received help from these systems and survivors who had contact with these systems but did not receive assistance from them.*



\*These statistics are non-cumulative. Survivors may reference multiple access points or may not provide this information.

To learn more about human trafficking, request a training, and to find out what you can do to get involved, visit [polarisproject.org](http://polarisproject.org) or [traffickingresourcecenter.org](http://traffickingresourcecenter.org). To get help or report suspected trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1-888-373-7888, or send a text to BeFree (233733).

## Appendix

The NHTRC and BeFree Textline collect two types of data – personally identifying information, such as location of a particular trafficking case and name of an alleged trafficker, and non-personally identifying information such as the type of trafficking reported.

The NHTRC and Polaris BeFree Textline collect personally identifying information where necessary to help a victim or survivor access services and to provide to law enforcement for the purposes of helping victims get to safety and/or investigating potential human trafficking cases. Individuals can get help or report a tip anonymously, and are asked to share only as much information as they are comfortable providing. The NHTRC and Polaris BeFree Textline will never share personally identifying information to any external agency, including law enforcement, service providers, and government agencies without the explicit permission of the caller, unless where required by law.

The NHTRC and Polaris BeFree Textline also collect basic, non-personally identifying information about the contacting individual, including his or her city and state, basic demographic information, and about the type of trafficking reported, including the city and state of the trafficking situation, and the basic demographic information of the individuals involved. Using non-personally identifying information, the NHTRC and Polaris BeFree Textline produce public reports with aggregate statistics based on region, trafficking type, and/or demographics to identify trends and patterns that can help inform anti-trafficking prevention and intervention efforts at the local, state, and national levels. The NHTRC and Polaris BeFree Textline will redact or group in an “other” category data we publish regarding unique or unusual cases if we believe it could be used to identify a particular person or situation.

Polaris Client Services programs operate on the basis of informed consent. A client has the right to make his or her own decisions regarding the services he or she receives and can deny these services at any time. Polaris Client Services programs adhere to strict confidentiality guidelines as regulated by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Polaris will not share any of the personal information we gain from a client with anyone other than Polaris staff unless

that client has authorized Polaris to disclose information through a signed document or if required by law. Polaris Client Services staff explain to every client that general, non-identifying information they provide may be shared for the purpose of education. Clients who are not fluent in English are provided with this information by an interpreter who is fluent in the client’s native language.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Polaris. (2014). *America’s Daughters* [video]. Retrieved from <http://www.polarisproject.org/americasdaughters>.

<sup>2</sup> International Labour Organization. (2012). ILO Global Estimate of Forced Labour. Retrieved from [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms\\_182004.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_182004.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Dank, M., et al. (2014). *Estimating the Size and Structure of the Underground Commercial Sex Economy in Eight Major US Cities*. The Urban Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.urban.org/research/publication/estimating-size-and-structure-underground-commercial-sex-economy-eight-major-us-cities>.

<sup>4</sup> Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, H.R. 3244, 106th Congress (2000). Retrieved from: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-106hr3244enr/pdf/BILLS-106hr3244enr.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> In 2014, the NHTRC and BeFree Textline received reports of 3,698 cases of sex trafficking in the U.S. In addition to the 1,611 cases referencing U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents that were analyzed for this report, foreign nationals were referenced in 471 cases that are not included in the analysis. Demographic information in cases is not cumulative; some individuals do not provide information on nationality when reporting, and some cases may involve both U.S. citizens and foreign national victims.

<sup>6</sup> Gibbs, D., et al. (2015). *Evaluation of Services for Domestic Minor Victims of Human Trafficking*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/248578.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Police Seize Pimping Rules During Raid. (14 August 2012). *The Smoking Gun*. Retrieved from <http://www.thesmokinggun.com/file/da-game-hoez?page=0>.

<sup>8</sup> Dank, M. (2014).

<sup>9</sup> The term “pimp” was used by many survivors to refer to their trafficker(s), while describing significantly different types of relationships with their trafficker(s). Because of the ambiguity of this term, Polaris has elected to focus on more descriptive categories in order to better represent the dynamics described by survivors.

<sup>10</sup> Lederer, L. J. & Wetzel, C. (Winter 2014). The Health Consequences of Sex Trafficking and Their Implications for Identifying Victims in Healthcare Facilities. *Annals of Health Law*, 23(1), 61-91. Retrieved from [http://www.annalsofhealthlaw.com/annalsofhealthlaw/vol\\_23\\_issue\\_1#pg1](http://www.annalsofhealthlaw.com/annalsofhealthlaw/vol_23_issue_1#pg1).

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. (n.d.) Child Sex Trafficking – 1 in 6 runaways [Website]. Retrieved from <http://www.missingkids.com/1in6>.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Department of State. (June 2014). *Trafficking in Persons Report*. Retrieved from: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/226844.pdf>.