

Challenges to stopping human trafficking



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Human-trafficking is a social problem because it happens frequently in all parts of the world, but is not publicized on a normal basis. This prevents people from learning and being aware about this issue. I think that if more people knew about the extent of human-trafficking it would be much less of an issue. I know from previous knowledge that other countries minority races and women are not treated fairly. In a place like Iran, males are superior to women and children. They have say in everything they do and how they act. This is most likely a contributor to the amount of human trafficking that is occurring. People are scared to speak up and say something in fear.

Human-trafficking is a topic most people do not hear about unless it happens to someone important or close to you. Many websites that I viewed compared human-trafficking to modern-day slavery. People are forcefully taken from their homes and families. They are transported to places all over the world and forced to work. Their “ work” includes many things from labor, to sex, and sometimes forced marriage. The International Labour Organization states that “ It is hard to track down a human trafficker because it is an illegal operation that is done under the radar. They estimated that around 40 million people were trafficked in 2017 alone. They state that about 25 million people were forced to do labor and 15 million are forced into marriage. That is around 5. 4 victims for every 1, 000 people in the world.” If you apply these statistics to our town, it is around 40 people in Washington, Iowa.

Human traffickers usually target people from the ages of 12 to 20. It also depends on what the trafficker specializes in. If they are sex traffickers, they target young females that are homeless and on the streets because no one

will report them missing. If they are looking for forced labor, they will most likely look for African American and Latino youth. According to Thorn.org “91% of people trafficked are African American and Latino youth.” Human-trafficking happens all over the world and in the U. S. In Washington, Iowa, we are 796 miles, 12 hours, and only 4 states away from the human-trafficking capital of the world. This is Atlanta, Georgia. Some other high rate trafficking states include California, New York, and Texas. People that experience human-trafficking and are able to get free will most likely experience trauma, diseases, addiction, malnourishment, and death. Most people that are trafficked have PTSD and are more likely to have a submissive and skittish personality. People are usually sold to traffickers because their parents need money or they believe they will have a “better life”. The traffickers or buyers are taking them and are forcing them to do work. If they do not do what they are supposed to, they might be beat, raped, sold, and possible even killed.

Traffickers are usually people that are already in the world of crime. They may have committed crimes such as drug use, have connections to other crimes or happen to need the money. With today’s technology, a lot of trafficking happens through social media. People talk to others they have never meet before and become “friends”, when in all reality they are falling into a sex-trafficking trap.

There are many different types of trafficking. The most common one that people hear about is sex-trafficking. Sex trafficking is when traffickers recruit, kidnap, transport, and force victims to participate in sexual activities. Sex-trafficking has tight ties to pornography, rape, prostitution, and abuse.

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I watched a Ted Talk about a woman that ran away at 12 years old in Virginia and went to Washington, D. C. She left her home because no one listened to her. She was walking in the streets and a woman approached her saying that she wanted to help her. The woman took the young girl to her house, and that is where she met her trafficker. The woman was recruiting other runaways. The trafficker then took her to a street corner in town and resold her to trafficker in New York. The new trafficker formed a “bond” with her that made her feel connected to him. She was taken away from the many opportunities and experiences she could have had during her childhood. She saw death and became addicted to heroin. She stated “Heroin saved my life. It numbed me to the existence that I was surviving.” She talked about her criminal record. When she was under 18 and being raped, she got in trouble instead of the true criminals due to the men paying money to make the issues go away. She stayed with the same trafficker for over a decade before she could escape. She says that traffickers know how to keep people vulnerable and it is all about supply and demand. After getting her life together, she is now spending her time helping others to get laws passed against human-trafficking. She said something that really touched me. She says that numbers are all over the place and it should not matter that this could be happening to 1 million kids or just 1 kid. This touches me because it shows that we do not worry about an issue unless it happens to bunch of people, when we should be worrying about it even if it just happens to 1 person.

I choose this topic because it is not talked about much in our daily life. In class, we talked about how the U. S tries to cover up the bad things to

maintain an image. We also do not hear about this because most of the people that are taken are usually homeless, have been in the system, or are from bad families. I think it is crazy that Atlanta, Georgia is the trafficking capital of the world and is so close to us. I learned how many people are really affected by human trafficking and it is more intense and scarier that we actually know. We have no idea what these people are going through every day, and all of it is against their choice. It is very eye opening to me that there are bad people in this world that would purposely hurt people mentally, physically, and emotionally. Victims are going to have scars the rest of their life, and they will probably never go away.

Websites

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_kXuQHZmWs
- <https://www.thorn.org/about-our-fight-against-sexual-exploitation-of-children/>
- <https://www.globallslaveryindex.org/2018/findings/country-studies/united-states/>
- <https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/what-human-trafficking>
- <https://polarisproject.org/human-trafficking>
- <http://humantraffickingsearch.org/top-3-states-for-human-trafficking/>
- <https://www.antislavery.org/slavery-today/human-trafficking/>