

ND Child Welfare Supervision

December 2018

In 2015, an estimated 1 out of 5 endangered runaways reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children were likely child sex trafficking victims.

Of those, 74% were in the care of social services or foster care when they ran.

While many think that child sex trafficking does not take place in the state of North Dakota, our statistics speak otherwise. From January of 2016 until September 30, 2018, 242 victims of trafficking were served in North Dakota. Of those victims, 182 of

them were minors. (Statistic provided by Youthworks - December 2018) The statistics also show that the Traffickers seek out our most vulnerable children. Children who may have already experienced abuse or neglect within their home, those with lack of stability, and those involved with the Juvenile Justice System. Being aware of our policies within North Dakota on reporting missing children and being aware of how to identify and the best way to assist victims is imperative. Many resources for us are at our fingertips. For more information on the policy in ND, click here: [ND Policy](#)



DID YOU KNOW? The average age of entry into the sex trafficking industry is 14 years old. Taken from: My Life My Choice a program of the Justice Resource Institute, Boston, MA.

North Dakota Policy on Missing Children & Human Trafficking

Missing Children: 624-05-15-50-34 The foster care case manager, upon determining that a foster child is missing, must make a report immediately, and in no case later than 12 hours using the 3 steps below:

- Immediately report the incident and pertinent information to local law enforcement. This includes requesting that law enforcement enter the pertinent information into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC)
- Immediately report the incident & pertinent information to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) or at <http://cmfc.missingkids.org/home>
- Immediately report the incident & pertinent information to the regional office.

Once the child is found, the above three steps should be repeated to inform all involved parties that the foster child is no longer missing or on the run. In addition:

The foster care case manager must screen the foster child to determine both primary factors that led to the child running away, as well as the child experience while absent from foster care. This includes determining that the child was a possible human trafficking crime. The ND Runaway and Missing Youth Screening – [SFN 573](#) shall be used to help identify if a child was a victim or exploited.

In the event that it is determined, that the foster child was a victim or sexually exploited, case management will ensure the following take place: medical screenings take place as needed, services are provided and all required documentation is completed.

ND Dept. of Human Services, CFS

Understanding Victims Mindsets & Barriers to Victim Identification

THERE ARE MANY REASONS WHY TRAFFICKED PERSONS CANNOT OR WILL NOT LEAVE A TRAFFICKING SITUATION. THIS LIST IS NOT MEANT TO REPRESENT ALL SITUATIONS, NOR IS IT INTENDED TO BE EXHAUSTIVE.

Frequent accompaniment/guarded:

Many times a victims' public interactions are mediated, monitored or controlled completely.

Use and threat of violence: Severe physical retaliation is used along with threats to hold victims in a state of constant fear and obedience.

Self-blame: due to the extreme psychological manipulation that occurs, the trafficked person may engage in self-blaming and this is reinforced by the traffickers and can impede the victim from testifying against or faulting the trafficker.

Traumatic bonding to the trafficker:

victims may exhibit similar behavioral traumatic bonding due to the violence and psychological abuse (aka Stockholm Syndrome)

Distrust of law enforcement or service providers:

Traffickers will often use methods to brainwash victims in a false distrust of law enforcement, and service providers. In addition, having a negative past experience with those helping providers can also negatively impact trust levels.

Facilitated drug addiction: Traffickers provide addictive substances to

their victims to foster long term drug addiction and dependency.

Lack of awareness or available resources:

Victims may not leave a situation due to lack of awareness of any other resources or services that are there to assist, and the traffickers control the information, or distort the information, that victims receive.

Normalization of exploitation:

After suffering from long periods of trauma, physical and sexual abuse as well as manipulation, victims may develop strategies and defense mechanism that normalize the abuse in their minds. The abuse may not be viewed as a normal part of everyday life. This makes it difficult to self-identify as a victim.

A belief that no one cares to help:

Many trafficking victims feel that no one cares about them or will help. This is reinforced by the traffickers via lies and also when community members or those of helping professions do not take a strong stance against trafficking. For more information on barriers click here:

[Polaris Project](#)

The Trauma Center at the Justice Resource Institute

also has created a handout on what behaviors you might see as well as tips or things to keep in mind when working with victims in order to develop rapport and keep victims safe. Click here:

[Project Reach](#)

Resources here in ND:

Melissa Williams, LSW
Human Trafficking Navigator
317 S University Dr, Fargo ND 58103
P 701.232.8558 C: 701.595.4604

Amy Jacobson, LSW
Human Trafficking Navigator
Youthworks
217 West Rosser
Bismarck, ND 58501
(701) 255-6909 Cell (701) 595-2112
ajacobson@youthworksnd.org

Anne LaFrinier-Ritchie
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
Human Trafficking Navigator
317 S University Dr. • Fargo, ND 58103
P 701.232.8558
Crisis Line: 701.526.HTND (4863)
www.youthworksND.org
www.facebook.com/youthworksnd

Risk Factors that Increase a child risk of becoming a victim of sex trafficking:

[Human Trafficking & Child Welfare: A Guide for Caseworkers](#) -Child Welfare Information Gateway
July 2017

- History of maltreatment at home, especially sexual abuse
- Involvement with the child welfare or juvenile justice system
- History of running away
- Homelessness
- Financial Problems
- Inadequate family or other relationships
- Identification as LBGTQ
- Lack of stability at home
- Low self esteem
- Substance abuse or mental health diagnosis – by self or family members

References: Human Trafficking and Child Welfare: A Guide for Caseworkers (retrieved 12-3-18) Child Welfare Information Gateway

https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/trafficking_caseworkers.pdf ; Utilizing Trauma-Informed Approaches to Trafficking-related Work (Retrieved 12-2-18) Project Reach Trauma Center at Justice Resource Institute. http://www.traumacenter.org/resources/H-O%20Trauma-Informed%20Case%20Study_final_2.pdf; ND Dept. of Human Services http://www.nd.gov/dhs/policymanuals/62405/62405.htm#624_05_15_50_32.htm?Highlight=human%20trafficking; Commercial Sexual Exploitation (Retrieved 11-22-2018) My Life My Choice <https://www.fightingexploitation.org>; Understanding Victims' Mindsets (retrieved 10-30-18), National Human Trafficking Resource Center, <https://www.nova.edu/create/projectheat/forms/section3.pdf>

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