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About Human Trafficking – Newsletter #9

What are the indicators of potential trafficking and exploitation of youth?

Statistics show that youth who are homeless, have runaway, have been victims of abuse, or involved with the child welfare system are disproportionately victims of trafficking. Transgendered youth are also a population served by programs that run drop in centers, and shelters, for trafficked youth.



Within 48 hours of running away, a young person is likely to be solicited for prostitution or another form of commercial sexual exploitation.

From another perspective, the U.S. Department of State notes that the *stigma and marginalization of a person with disabilities* makes them particularly vulnerable in terms of their educational and employment levels potentially making them more likely to be on the street, or some traffickers feeling that the victim will be “less likely to raise an alarm or seek help” or be an effective witness in a legal proceeding.

Youth who are victims of trafficking may

- Be secretive about their whereabouts
- Be absent for days
- Move about, or be moved often
- Have their movements and communication controlled
- Not trust adults and be fearful of authority figure, especially law enforcement

There may be physical signs such as

- Possessing new clothes, electronics, or other unexplained “gifts”
- Signs of violence, including bruises and cuts
- Branding or tattoos they are vague in explaining
- Unmet health needs or signs of hunger/malnourishment

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Their demeanor may reflect

- Isolation from family or friends
- Feelings of shame, blame or humiliation
- Non-identification of themselves as being involved in trafficking or as victims
- Lack of trust, lack of eye contact and general lack of interest/interaction

Resources to learn more about trafficking

[U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/endtrafficking)
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/endtrafficking>

[Polaris Project](http://www.polarisproject.org/)
<http://www.polarisproject.org/>

[Shared Hope International](http://sharedhope.org/)
<http://sharedhope.org/>

[National Center for Missing and Exploited Children](http://www.missingkids.org/)
<http://www.missingkids.org/>

[ECPAT International](http://www.ecpat.net/)
<http://www.ecpat.net/>