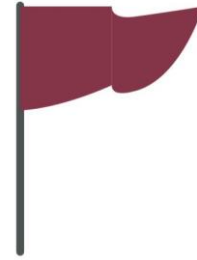


HUMAN TRAFFICKING: Red Flags and Indicators



ABOUT THESE INDICATORS

It is important to keep in mind that no one red flag or behavioral indicator is a sure sign of human trafficking. Instead, think about these red flags and indicators as a constellation of signs and symptoms, when you start to see several of these emerging, it should lead you to suspect some form of exploitation, possibly trafficking. Human trafficking indicators can be similar and overlapping, though there are some that are unique.

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

- Unexplained injuries (multiple scars, broken teeth, burns)
- Evidence of prolonged infection or time since injury (injuries that have begun to heal incorrectly due to lack of treatment, i.e. broken bones)
- Bacterial infection and/or yeast infections or frequent STIs
- Work-related injuries (preventable with safety equipment)
- Multiple or frequent pregnancy/abortions
- Signs of malnourishment or generally poor health: Malnutrition, dehydration, extreme weight loss, exhaustion, and dental and visual problems (if they've been deprived of adequate food, water, light, and sleep)
- Effects of prolonged exposure to extreme temperatures or industrial or agricultural chemicals
- Repeated motion injuries
- Cardiovascular and respiratory problems caused or worsened by stress (high blood pressure or acute respiratory distress)
- Chronic back pain, headaches, or migraines
- Tattoos or other types of branding – i.e. cutting or burning
- Addiction to drugs and/or alcohol, substance use disorders
- Evidence of sexual trauma - Presence of unexplained or unusual scar tissue – potentially from forced abortions

BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS

- Individual claims to be “just visiting” an area but is unable to articulate where he/she is staying; the Individual does not know the city or state of his/her current location
- Individual has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story and/or exhibits a loss of sense of time or space
- Someone is claiming to speak for, or on behalf of a victim – i.e. an interpreter, often of the same ethnic group, male or female; victim is not allowed to speak for him/herself
- Individual does not have any type of legal documentation
- Individual seems to be repeating a scripted or inconsistent history or story
- Not making eye contact
- Individual not in control of their identification documents
- Youth having relationships with older, unexplained adults
- Individual has no idea when his/her last medical exam was
- Lack of healthcare insurance – i.e. paying with cash
- Individual exhibits behaviors including “hyper-vigilance” or paranoia, fear, anxiety, depression, submission, tension and/or nervousness, hostility
- Individual may either be in crisis, or may downplay existing health problems or risks
- Individual may resist your help or demonstrate fear that the information he/she gives you will lead to arrest, placement in social services, return to family, or retribution from trafficker
- Individual has been abused at work or threatened with harm by an employer or supervisor
- Individual is not allowed to take adequate break, food, or water while at work and/or is not provided adequate protective equipment for hazardous work
- Individual is required to live in the place of employment or housing provided by the employer
- Individual does not have appropriate clothing for the weather or venue

MENTAL HEALTH INDICATORS

- Depression
- Suicidal tendencies or self-harming behaviors
- Anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorders
- Lack of emotional response
- Hyper-vigilance
- Hostility
- Dissociation disorders such as memory loss, lack of sense of self-identity
- Delayed physical or cognitive development
- Impaired social skills

