



CASINOS COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**A TOOLKIT FOR
CASINOS AND BUS
COMPANIES**



When I was being trafficked, people assumed I was a prostitute. My trafficking was hidden in plain sight, in the middle of casinos on the Las Vegas strip around thousands of people a day. I remember thinking that there were three groups of people: the men who looked at me as if I were a product to buy, the people who looked at me like I was the trash of the earth, and the people who tried to pretend I was invisible. I had to go find the men who would want to buy me in the casinos. My life was in danger if I didn't make money for my trafficker. Everyone thought they knew what I was, so no one asked; but if someone stopped to talk to me maybe they would have found out what was happening to me. During my trafficking I internalized what everyone around me told me ... that I did this by choice, and that I was less than everyone else. The more I internalized, the more I didn't reach out for help.

-Annika Huff

**TOOLKIT CREATED BY SURVIVOR-LEADER ANNIKA HUFF
AND BUSING ON THE LOOKOUT (BOTL).**

BOTL IS A PROGRAM OF TRUCKERS AGAINST TRAFFICKING, A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION THAT EXISTS TO EDUCATE, EQUIP, EMPOWER AND MOBILIZE MEMBERS OF THE TRUCKING, BUS AND ENERGY INDUSTRIES TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING.


WWW.BUSINGONTHELOOKOUT.ORG

INTRODUCTION


WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking is the exploitation of human beings through force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of forced labor or commercial sex, wherein a third party is making a profit. Victims find themselves in situations they literally cannot get out of, while traffickers use whatever means necessary to keep making money at their expense. Human trafficking is modern-day slavery.

There are an estimated 40 million victims of human trafficking globally, including thousands of children and adults in the United States and Canada. Human trafficking has been reported in all 50 states and 10 Canadian provinces, including in and connected to casinos. Victims of trafficking may be found in various legitimate businesses, as traffickers exploit those businesses for their personal gain.



This toolkit, created by survivor leader, Annika Huff, is designed to educate and equip casino and bus industry employees, so that working together they are able to recognize and report human trafficking situations happening within their community. Moreover, as legal action can be taken against businesses if trafficking is occurring on their premises, instituting this training makes sense from a risk management perspective.



BACKGROUND

SEX TRAFFICKING IN CASINOS: BACKGROUND

Survivors have reported their traffickers using casinos as a meeting place for buyers who were arranged online or as a venue to solicit prospective buyers, particularly when the casino is combined with a hotel. Casinos can also be a refuge for victims, offering a secure place where they can seek help or attempt to exit their situation. Similarly for the charter buses and scheduled service bus lines that carry patrons to and from casinos, they may come into contact with trafficking victims who are being transported on those buses or see the bus as a lifeline for escape.

When operating at a casino or hotel-casino, the traffickers may be with their victims – or on the premises – or may send their victims to the casinos to find buyers on their own. If on the premises, while their victims are working, traffickers may go to a hang-out area, where multiple traffickers entertain themselves with drinks and play games. When victims are on the premises without their trafficker, there may be a strong trauma-bond (powerful emotional attachments that occur as a result of cycles of abuse), which makes it more likely that victims will stick to a scripted story, refuse to cooperate or claim they are there by “choice.”

IT IS CRITICAL THAT CASINO AND BUS EMPLOYEES DO NOT TURN A BLIND EYE OR WRITE OFF A PERSON BEING SOLD AS “JUST A PROSTITUTE.”

Traffickers are cheap, always looking to cut costs, so hotel-casinos can be appealing to them, because the buyers already have a room, and they don’t have to assume that expense. On the other hand, traffickers want to evade getting caught and will avoid bringing their illicit activities to businesses that have the reputation of having staff trained on how to recognize human trafficking and who are willing to report it to law enforcement.

BACKGROUND

Sex trafficking in casinos tends to have its own set of rules that the traffickers and victims will follow based, in part, on the operations and culture of the casino itself. Given that, there tend to be two categories of victims.

- Victims who are new to being trafficked in casinos and generally don't know the particular rules and culture of the venue. They may have a harder time approaching buyers and may be easier to spot, because they will act more fearfully, have anxiety and be more on edge.
- Victims who have experience in casinos are more likely to know the casino floor plan, hours of staff members and what is typical for the particular casinos where they are trafficked. They will likely not be the "sympathetic victim," but instead act more aggressive, often dressing and talking like they are there by "choice." Victims in this category are more likely to run away if they believe an employee or others are suspicious of them.

Likewise, buyers of commercial sex tend to fall into two different categories. There are the repeat buyers who have been to casinos to purchase prostituted people before and have returned with the intention of purchasing sex again, whether with a specific girl or someone else. The other category is the new or "opportunistic" buyers. These are buyers who have either not purchased sex before or who did not come to the casino with a plan or the intention of purchasing sex. Warning signs can be an effective deterrent for opportunistic buyers.

OPPORTUNISTIC BUYERS ARE LESS LIKELY TO BUY SEX WHEN THERE ARE WARNING SIGNS INDICATING IT IS NOT LEGAL IN THE COUNTY OR NOT TOLERATED ON THE PROPERTY.



Hotel-casino owners and managers must be vigilant in their employment policies to make sure they do not have bad apples on staff who are complicit in facilitating the crime of trafficking. In some cases, hotel-casino employees (valet, front desk, bell hops, dealers, cocktail waitress and waiters, hotel maids, etc.) have been reported to act as middle men in setting up prostituted people with buyers. In these scenarios, the trafficker may pay the casino employee a cut. This may be done while at work or when off the clock.

Seasonal differences in particular locations may impact the patterns of traffickers and their victims. Busier seasons, for example, can both increase patronage to the casinos as well as increase demand for purchasing sex. During slower seasons, however, victims have more difficulty making the money that their traffickers demand. They will have to take lower amounts from buyers and be at the casino longer or during daytime hours, which increases their risk of arrest. As a result, during these times, victims are more likely to come into the casinos bruised or beaten up.



BACKGROUND



Studies have found a correlation between major events and increases in sex trafficking, because of increases in demand for commercial sex during those events, especially for events in which there are large numbers of men visiting from out of town. These spikes occur during sports events, concerts or music festivals, trade shows and conferences. During certain sporting events, such as March Madness, there may be a spike in both casino patronage and a demand for purchasing sex, regardless of whether the sporting event is in that location or not, because more men are on site to watch and place bets on the games.

There is not a standard outfit or fashion choice for prostituted people in casinos. They will be dressed based on what they think will appeal to buyers in that location and will try not to dress in a way that stands out as inappropriate for the season or their age. Buyers' preferences may vary depending on their age, socio-economic status and reason for visiting. For example, men who are coming for a bachelor party may like to see girls in more provocative clothing looking like they're going to the club. Whereas men who are on business trips may prefer more high-end wear, because it's more discreet, and they will not be embarrassed if a coworker sees them walking to the hotel room.



“DURING THE DAY WHEN I WAS BEING TRAFFICKED, IT WOULD BE ODD OR INAPPROPRIATE IF I WAS TO WEAR AN OUTFIT THAT I WOULD WEAR TO A CLUB, SO I WORE A SWIMSUIT AND SAID I WAS GOING TO THE POOL PARTIES. KIDS WON'T WALK AROUND THE CASINO FLOOR IN LINGERIE, BECAUSE THEY WANT THEM TO BLEND IN.”

–ANNIKA HUFF



If selling a child or adolescent who is unlikely to pass as age 21 or over, traffickers may opt to sell that victim at a “family-friendly casino,” where they are more likely to blend in. It is important to always remember that according to the U.S. definition of sex trafficking, any minor involved in commercial sex is a victim of trafficking automatically. For victims under 18, the elements of force, fraud, or coercion do not need to be established.

EVALUATING RISK AND LOOKING FOR BUYERS IN CASINOS

Victims of sex trafficking are under enormous pressure to earn money for their traffickers and not be arrested. Traffickers will learn the hours and operations of the casinos, as well as the schedules of the head of security and pit bosses. When arriving at a casino, prostituted people working the casino floor will often walk the perimeter to evaluate risk and the likelihood of finding a buyer.

- Victims will learn the casino floor map — they will learn the locations of the hotel room elevators, the security cameras and the exits.
- Victims will continuously watch for the level of security and which employees are working.
- Victims will continuously watch the men. They will notice which men are big winners that night, which men are drunk and how many men are in the casino.
- Victims have a heightened awareness of other victims — they will continuously watch for other prostituted people on the floor. If there are too many, there is more likelihood of a raid, in which case, all of them risk getting arrested. On the other hand, having too few prostituted people in the casino makes it look like security has been tight, and it will scare off traffickers.
- Victims will continuously watch the number of families. They will be particularly aware of mothers or other women who don't like prostitution happening in the casino, out of concern that they will complain and the victim will be run out of the building or arrested.
- Victims are very aware of traffickers. They will continuously watch how many traffickers are in the casino, in part because the presence of too many traffickers may make it harder to find a buyer.

RED-FLAG INDICATORS IN A CASINO

Identifying a person who is being exploited is not a simple matter. Use your instincts, power of observation, and (when possible) a few well-placed questions to help determine if you're looking at a potential human trafficking situation. Keep in mind that *multiple* indicators will most likely present themselves when this crime is occurring.

- Visible bruising
- Under 21 (A child or children who can't pass as 21 will be sold in "family-friendly" casinos where they're more likely to blend in.)
- Prostituted people will be dressed for the types of buyers they are hoping to attract (age, social class, reason for visit to the casino, etc.).
- Individuals who walk around the perimeter of the casino when they first arrive may be scoping out security or looking for buyers. They will commonly stop in the bar area, near the hotel elevators, or on corners where there is a lot of foot traffic.
- Women or girls (could be a boy or man) may be looking for men who are winning big at the gaming tables, drunk, groups that look like they're partying or alone. They may have been seen approaching men at the bar or on the casino floor who they do not seem to know. Common lines for them to use may be "Lucky night?" "Do you have a cigarette?" or "Looking to party?"
- Prostituted people in casinos may openly talk about lap dances or strip teases but are unlikely to talk about money or any form of sexual exchange.
- People making recurring and frequent (less than an hour) trips between the casino floor and a hotel room
- Women carrying expensive items, including jewelry, male watches, electronics, etc.
- Trafficking victims in casinos will usually have their phone in hand — they will answer every call but will be discreet when talking to their trafficker around men (prospective buyers).
- The season may impact patterns. During busier seasons, prostituted people may come in more often, while during slow seasons, victims are more likely to come in bruised, for longer hours and/or during the day.
- Room booked for large number of people, usually a group of girls ... the booking will be under pimp's name or "the bottom" (prostituted person who is given authority over other victims).
- Individuals who come into town without booking a room or who come in often and seem to be on "a route"

RED-FLAG INDICATORS FOR BUSES GOING TO CASINOS

Bus drivers can gain basic knowledge of human trafficking and its intersection with buses through watching BOTL's free 30 minute training video. Bus drivers on casino routes may notice red flags among the passengers they are transporting or may observe things going on around them that may not involve their passengers, such as while they are parked at the casino or waiting somewhere else on the premises.

- People who ride the bus regularly to the casino or gaming town but don't seem to gamble or have a job in town
- Women or girls (could be a boy or man) who have visible signs of physical abuse (bruising, malnutrition, branding, etc.)
- People who are dressed oddly or out of context for their age or the weather
- Children traveling with an adult that they seem uneasy to be around
- Victims and traffickers may or may not sit together on the bus. If they sit together and don't think anyone is listening, they may talk about plans openly. If they are not sitting together but the trafficker is on the bus, he may give physical cues to the victim.
- Traffickers will travel home with victims if they traveled with them to the casino. As traffickers have been known to recruit out of casinos, they may come back with a new or prospective victim they seem to be getting to know.
- Victims will not make eye contact or might not be allowed to look out the windows.
- Prostituted people may set up dates on the bus but will only talk about lap dances or strip teases and will not likely set a dollar amount at that time.
- Victims will travel at night (6 pm–2 am) or early morning (5–9 am), but may not have booked a room in town.
- Individuals who come up more frequently when busy season starts
- Young people who are under 21 but aren't traveling to the town for any age-appropriate activities
- Women or girls (could be a boy or man) who are coming back from town with items they didn't have before, including large amounts of cash, chips, jewelry, male watches, electronics, or other items of value
- Victims and their trafficker may get off the bus in different spots, but texts or physical cues will indicate they are together.

WHAT TO DO

WHAT TO DO

IF A POTENTIAL SITUATION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS UNCOVERED, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ACTION STEPS:

1. IN CASE OF IMMEDIATE DANGER, CALL 911.

If you believe someone in your establishment or on your bus is in danger (especially a child under 18), please call 911 for immediate response from local law enforcement.

2. IF YOU IDENTIFY A MISSING CHILD IN THE UNITED STATES, CALL THE NCMEC HOTLINE.

If you believe you have identified a missing child in the United States, call the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children toll-free Hotline at **1-800-843-5678**.

3. IF YOU SUSPECT HUMAN TRAFFICKING, CALL THE NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE.

If you suspect human trafficking or exploitation may be happening in your establishment but do not think anyone is in immediate danger, call the human trafficking hotline. Both the United States and Canada have human trafficking hotlines that are multilingual, accessible nationwide and are staffed to answer calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year.

- **National Human Trafficking Hotline in the United States: 1-888-373-7888**
- **Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-833-900-1010**

Calls received by either hotline are always anonymous unless the caller chooses to provide the operator with his or her name and contact information and authorizes its use. This information is not given to law enforcement, other individuals or other agencies without prior consent. Once a call is received, next steps may include:

- An additional call to the caller to confirm the accuracy of information (with the caller's consent);
- Provision of materials and/or referrals to organizations in the caller's area serving trafficking victims;
- A report to a local anti-trafficking organization, service provider, or law enforcement.

In all cases, casinos should have internal reporting protocols in place for when trafficking is suspected and always make sure their employees keep safety in mind as they act.

VICTIM-CENTERED APPROACH

VICTIM-CENTERED APPROACH

When interacting with potential victims, be sure to employ a victim-centered approach, as it is imperative that they feel safe and that you are on their side ... not trying to get them arrested.

- Ask if the victim would like to speak to a female guard if possible.
- Separate victims if in a group.
- See if they need food or water before starting the conversation in private with them.
- Create a non-judgmental space.
- Start the conversation with “We educate EVERYONE who we bring into our booking area about human trafficking.”
- Provide an anti-trafficking brochure or flyer to the individual as it gets attention off the guard and is a safer way to introduce the concept of human trafficking (some victims won’t have ever heard of the term).
- Say “We are available to help you, and we can contact these resources with you or for you if you’d like to get out of a situation you’re in ... we want to make sure you are safe.”
- As much as possible, make sure you tell him/her every step of the way what is happening and what they can expect next.
- Have a list of local resources available in the security area that are updated regularly, and be ready to contact them to provide victim services.

QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS TO ASK A POTENTIAL VICTIM



If you do find yourself interacting with a potential victim, a few well-placed questions can help you determine the appropriate next steps. These are questions such as:

- Are you safe?
- Does anyone control you or tell you what to do?
- Are your calls, texts, emails, or other conversations ever restricted or monitored?
- Do you have access to your ID or other personal documents?
- Do you get to keep the money you earn or does someone else take all or part of it?
- What would happen if you left this situation or person?
- If we could provide you with a safe place to escape to, would you like that today?

WHAT TO DO

ADDITIONAL ACTION STEPS

- Show all casino employees and bus drivers on casino routes the 25 minute multimedia online training, “Casinos Combating Human Trafficking,” available for free at www.truckersagainsttrafficking.org.
- Post information about the human trafficking hotline in bathrooms (especially in private stalls), on casino floors and on buses.
- Post informational and resource posters or a video for victims in security booking area.
- Post informational and warning posters near hotel registration for buyers.
- Adopt an anti-human trafficking policy with a demand-reduction focus and share the Truckers Against Trafficking “Addressing Demand: Man to Man” training video.
- Contact Truckers Against Trafficking/Busing on the Lookout at tat.truckers@gmail.com for more information or to obtain printed materials.

WARNING

- Please do not approach traffickers. Call the hotline and/or the local police (911). Allow law enforcement to deal with traffickers and recover victims. Approaching traffickers is not only dangerous for you and their victims but could lead to problems in the eventual prosecution of traffickers.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A: VICTIM-CENTERED POSTERS

According to data from the National Human Trafficking Hotline, the top type of callers are “community members”... but after that it is victims themselves who are seeking assistance. Busing on the Lookout (BOTL) worked with survivors of sex trafficking to create a series of posters that use language and visuals intended to be eye catching for victims to see and know they are not alone – and there are resources out there. These posters also contribute to general public awareness about how vulnerable girls, boys, women and men can get lured into trafficking situations. BOTL will share these designs with bus companies and casinos free of charge.



APPENDIX B:

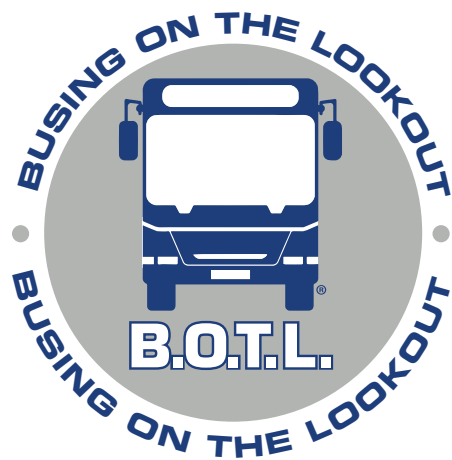
DEMAND-REDUCTION BUSINESS INITIATIVE

At the end of the day if no one purchased commercial sex, the crime of sex trafficking wouldn't exist. Therefore, it is imperative that we address the issue of demand in order to create a culture where the buying and selling of human beings for another's sexual gratification is not looked upon as normal behavior.

To that end, TAT created the video, "Addressing Demand: Man to Man," in order to get the conversation started. In addition to sharing the Addressing Demand video with all employees, casinos and bus companies should adopt and communicate policies to all employees that explicitly stand against sex trafficking, including sex buying.



For more information on demand-reduction steps businesses can take, visit:
<https://truckersagainsttrafficking.org/man-to-man-campaign/>



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