

Combating Trafficking

Native Youth Toolkit on Human Trafficking



WHAT'S INSIDE:

- What is Human Trafficking?
- Stories of Human Trafficking
- Tips for Protecting Yourself
- Ways You Can Fight Human Trafficking In Your Community
- Additional Resources

“You can save a life and make a difference in your community.”

—J.M., Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Member



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES
Office of Trafficking in Persons



What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is a form of modern slavery.

Signs of human trafficking include when someone:

- Is not free to come and go as he or she wishes
- Shows signs of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse
- Is younger than 18 years old and performing sex acts for money or something of value (e.g., food, clothing, housing, alcohol, drugs, etc.)
- Is in the commercial sex industry and has a pimp or someone controlling him or her
- Has few or no personal possessions or is not in control of their own money
- Is unpaid or is paid very little
- Owes a large debt and is unable to pay it off
- Works long and/or unusual hours

There are two types of trafficking:

Sex Trafficking occurs when an adult is compelled to engage in commercial sex by force, fraud, or coercion or **any time** in which a minor is engaged in commercial sex. Commercial sex is when a sex act is exchanged for something of value, which does not have to be money.

Labor Trafficking involves children and adults compelled to perform labor or services by force, fraud, or coercion. Employers use physical or psychological control, such as physical abuse, demanding laborer to repay a loan, threatening to hurt family and friends, and/or taking away identification documents or money so that victims believe they have no choice but to continue working for that employer.

In one example of human trafficking in Indian Country, a man invited teenagers to parties and gained their trust by providing them with drugs and alcohol. He then used a combination of physical abuse and psychological coercion, such as threatening to send nude pictures of the girls to their families, to force them into performing sex acts for money. This man was convicted of sex trafficking in 2012.

“A [buyer of commercial sex] said to me, ‘I thought we killed all of you.’”

-- Anonymous, from the report:
“Garden of Truth: The Prostitution and Trafficking of Native Women in Minnesota”

Stories of Human Trafficking

Who becomes a victim of human trafficking?

Anyone can fall victim to human trafficking, even you. Human trafficking is not limited by sex, socioeconomic status, race, or ethnicity. Traffickers prey on individuals seeking better opportunities, often with promises of a better life.

Who are traffickers?

- Traffickers can be anyone— adults or children, male or female— some are strangers, while others are peers, friends, or romantic partners. Traffickers may **meet victims in person or online.**
- Sometimes **family members traffic their own relatives for money or drugs.** In one case, a woman sold youth under her care for sex to construction workers in exchange for gas, food, and beer.
- Traffickers may **make offers of false employment,** such as modeling, singing, or dancing. Traffickers may also **pose as a boyfriend, romantic partner, or caregiver** to build trust, power, and control before exploiting their victims.

*“When my daughter was 14 years old, she ended up involved in prostitution. As a child, she was molested. She was so upset about her life and told me to go away. She was suicidal and couldn’t live with herself. **No one was there to help her.***

*When she went missing, I went to the police and had to wait. They told me that if my daughter is missing then it was probably a runaway and not kidnapping. There were no resources for us. She later ended up in prison. **I understand how these things happen in our communities.***

*Now that I have learned about human trafficking, I am going to go home and yell from my experience. It hurt so bad to have to live with this. A lot of women, men, daughters, and sons are going away. **I am going to yell and scream for those who are going through this until I am heard and something is done.”***

-- B.L., Quechuan Tribal Member

Stories of Human Trafficking Cont'd

Where does human trafficking occur?

- Human trafficking can happen anywhere, in both rural and urban communities, including Indian Country.
- People can be trafficked in legal industries such as factories, farms, ranches, restaurants, bars, construction sites, hotels, casinos, massage businesses, strip clubs, and even in private homes in your community.
- They can also be trafficked through illicit means, including internet-based commercial sex, street-based commercial sex, brothels, and the drug trade.

Why is it hard for people to leave?

- Traffickers work hard to stop victims from leaving. They may use physical force (rape, kidnapping, violence) or threaten to hurt the victim or someone the victim cares about.
- Traffickers may control through blackmail, such as threatening to share personal information or explicit photos with the victim's family or friends.
- Traffickers take time to build trust and an emotional connection. They may manipulate victims to believe that they are the only person who loves them.
- Traffickers separate victims from their friends and family, making them depend on the trafficker for their basic needs (love, money, or a place to stay).

Learn more here:

- <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/>
- <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/endtrafficking>
- <https://ovc.ncjrs.gov/humantrafficking/>
- <https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign>
- <http://nationalsafeplace.org/>
- <https://www.niwrc.org/>

"I was embarrassed to tell anyone, I didn't want to shame my family. I wanted to die.

*I eventually escaped and now work fighting trafficking. **I never want anyone to go through what I went through.** It's important to know the signs and have the tools to protect yourself.*

*Hold events, movie screenings, and talk to your friends and family about human trafficking. If you see something suspicious report it. **You can save a life and make a difference in your community.***

-- J.M., Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Member



Tips for Protecting Yourself Against Human Trafficking

1) Stay safe online.

Develop good social media habits. Reduce your risk by screening friends and follower requests and making your profiles private. Be careful what information you share online, especially with strangers.

2) Know your worth.

Traffickers prey on individuals with low self esteem. Your culture can be a source of pride. Learn about your tribal identity and heritage, including your oral traditions, tribal language, and songs.

3) Stay in school and avoid drugs and alcohol.

Get involved with after-school activities and youth programs. Drug or alcohol use just makes it easier for someone to take advantage of you.

4) Stay connected.

Traffickers look for the loners. Maintain good relationships with family and friends. Reach out to them when you need help or are feeling lonely.

5) Research a job offer before taking it.

Verify your potential employer, only accept legal work, and make sure you have a written employment agreement.

6) Ask for help.

Traffickers target runaways. If you feel that you cannot stay in your home, reach out to a trusted member of your community. Call the National Runaway Safeline at 1-800-RUNAWAY (786-2929) or chat with them at www.1800runaway.org.

A well-informed and healthy tribal community is less susceptible to human trafficking.

Human trafficking is not our way, but we can work to end it.

Human trafficking violates our traditional values and it is a crime that occurs in Indian Country. Previous experiences with violence puts American Indians and Alaska Natives at a higher risk for exploitation. This toolkit is designed to empower you and your community to prevent and respond to human trafficking.

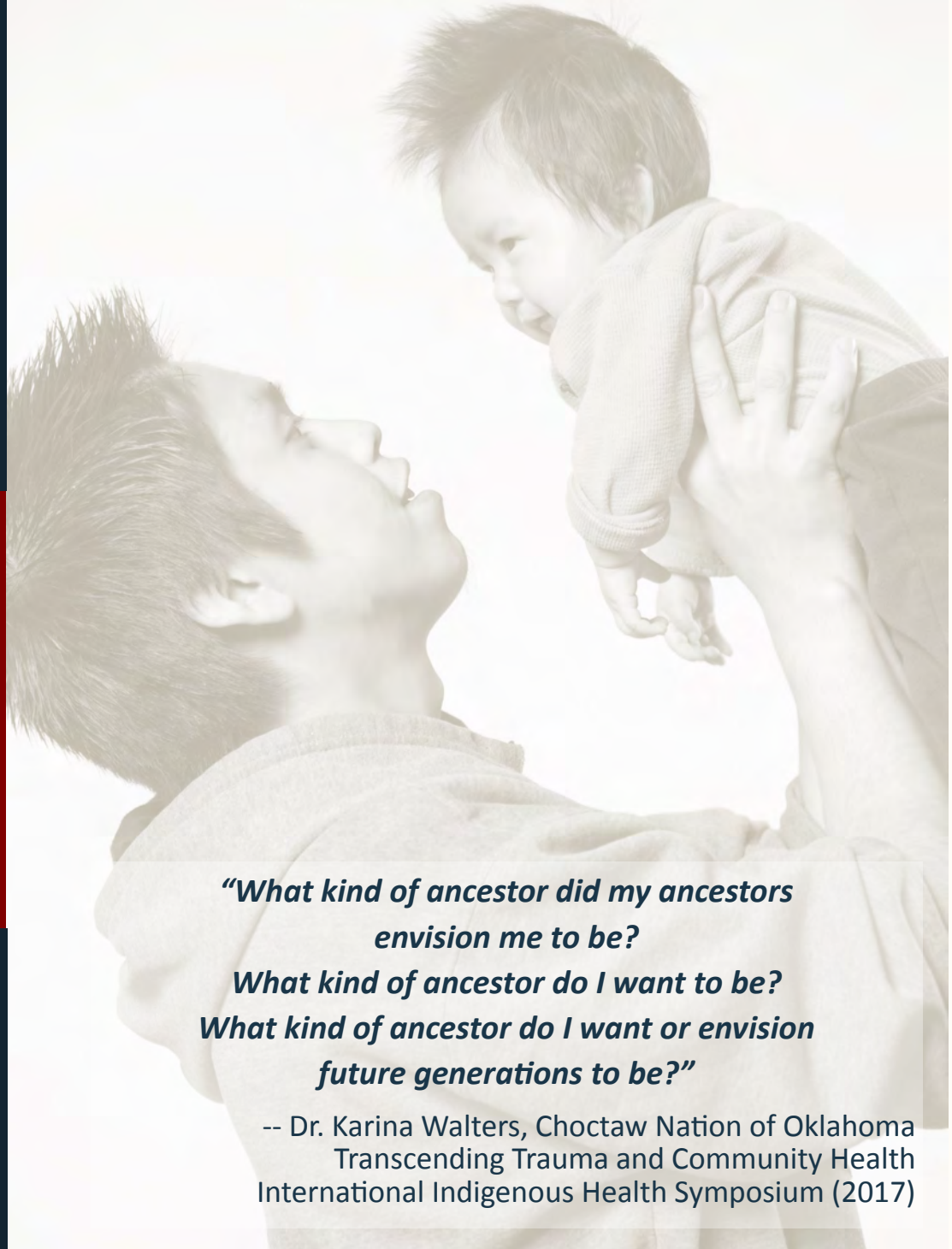
116 potential cases of human trafficking reported involved American Indians and Alaska Natives.

(National Human Trafficking Hotline, January 1, 2011-March 31, 2017)

37% of sex trafficking cases involving American Indians and Alaska Natives referenced minor victims.

(National Human Trafficking Hotline, January 1, 2011-March 31, 2017)

Some of the risk factors associated with trafficking, include prior physical or sexual abuse, poverty, alcohol or drug use, and homelessness.



***“What kind of ancestor did my ancestors
envision me to be?”***

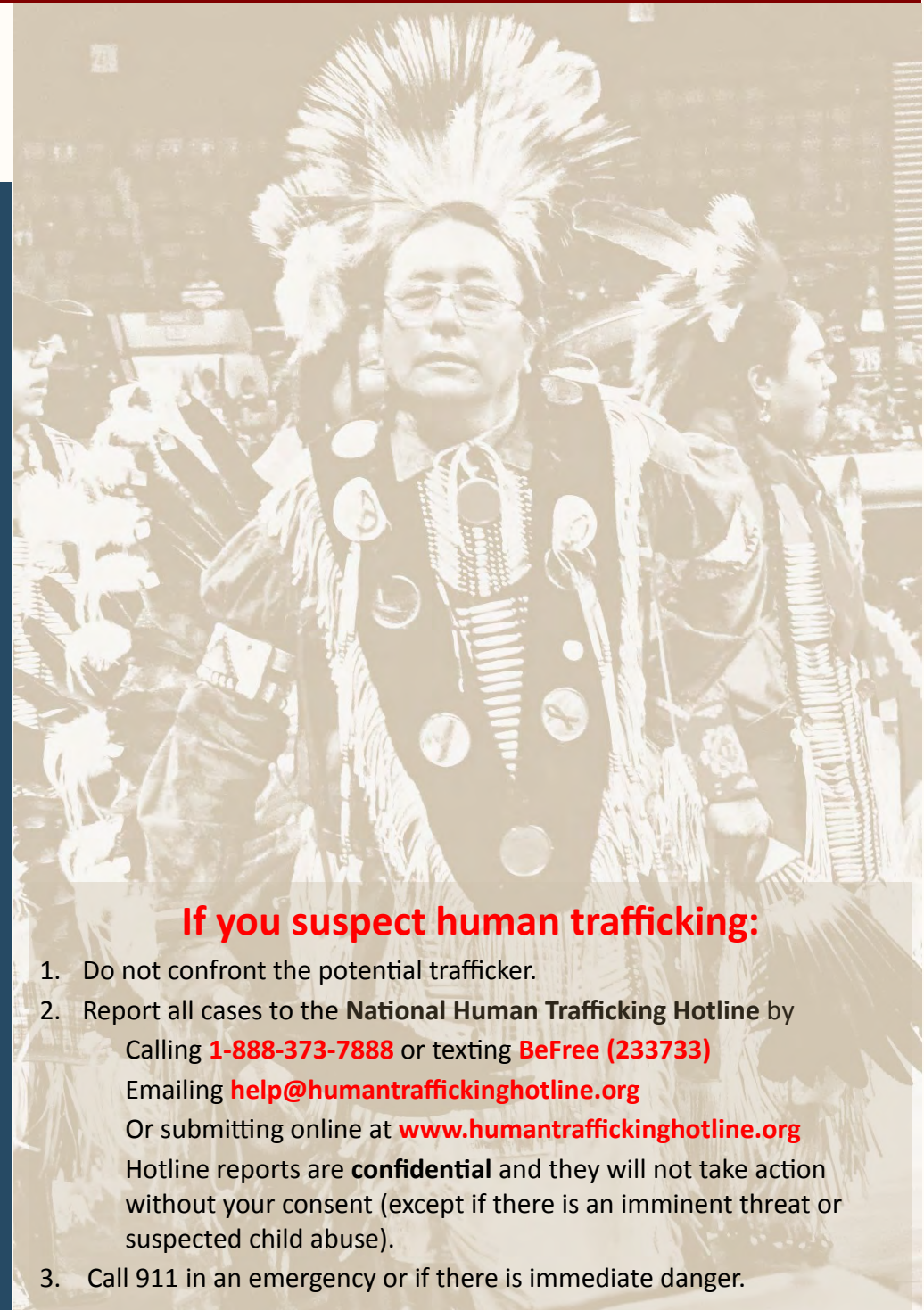
What kind of ancestor do I want to be?

***What kind of ancestor do I want or envision
future generations to be?”***

-- Dr. Karina Walters, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Transcending Trauma and Community Health
International Indigenous Health Symposium (2017)

Ways You Can Fight Human Trafficking In Your Community

- 1) **Talk to your tribal leaders about human trafficking.**
Make them aware of the issue and how it impacts your community. Some tribes have recently passed their own laws; you can help yours do the same.
- 2) **Start a school coalition to end human trafficking.**
Create a safe space for conversation and educate your classmates on the ways to protect each other.
- 3) **Hang posters in your community.**
Make information on the National Human Trafficking Hotline and human trafficking available in your community. You can start with the poster included in this toolkit.
- 4) **Use social media to speak out against human trafficking.**
Complete and post the sign “I stand against human trafficking by _____” in this toolkit. Use #endtrafficking and #lookbeneaththesurface to add your voice to the conversation.
- 5) **Strengthen your community.**
Find useful ways to serve and contribute to your community. Work with kids that are younger than you, show them that they are valued, and provide them with a safe place to learn and grow.
- 6) **Spread awareness and support survivors.**
You can do this through fundraising events, such as a movie screening featuring a film focused on human trafficking with a discussion afterward.



If you suspect human trafficking:

1. Do not confront the potential trafficker.
2. Report all cases to the **National Human Trafficking Hotline** by
Calling **1-888-373-7888** or texting **BeFree (233733)**
Emailing **help@humantraffickinghotline.org**
Or submitting online at **www.humantraffickinghotline.org**
Hotline reports are **confidential** and they will not take action without your consent (except if there is an imminent threat or suspected child abuse).
3. Call 911 in an emergency or if there is immediate danger.

Social Media Resources for Native Youth

Like:

- [StrongHearts Native Helpline](#)
- [National Indian Women's Resource Center \(NIWRC\)](#)
- [Girls Educational & Mentoring Services](#)
- [Polaris Project](#)
- [Safe Horizon](#)



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- [@niwrc](#)
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#endtrafficking

#lookbeneaththesurface



NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE

Human trafficking is modern-day slavery,
and it's happening right here in the United States.

You can help.

1-888-373-7888

CONFIDENTIAL | TOLL-FREE | 24/7

www.HumanTraffickingHotline.org

Interpreters available

CALL THE HOTLINE TO:

- ① Get help.
- ② Report a tip.
- ③ Find services.
- ④ Learn about your options.

Victims are forced to provide labor or commercial sex in many situations, including the following venues/industries:

SEX TRAFFICKING

Hotel-Based Commercial Sex
Fake Massage Businesses
Street-Based Commercial Sex
Residential Brothels
Truck Stops
Escort Services

LABOR TRAFFICKING

Domestic Work
Agriculture
Travelling Sales Crew
Health & Beauty Services
Restaurants
Construction

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I stand against human trafficking by



#lookbeneaththesurface

#endtrafficking



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