

# HUMANS OVER --- HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Join the movement.



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Hi.

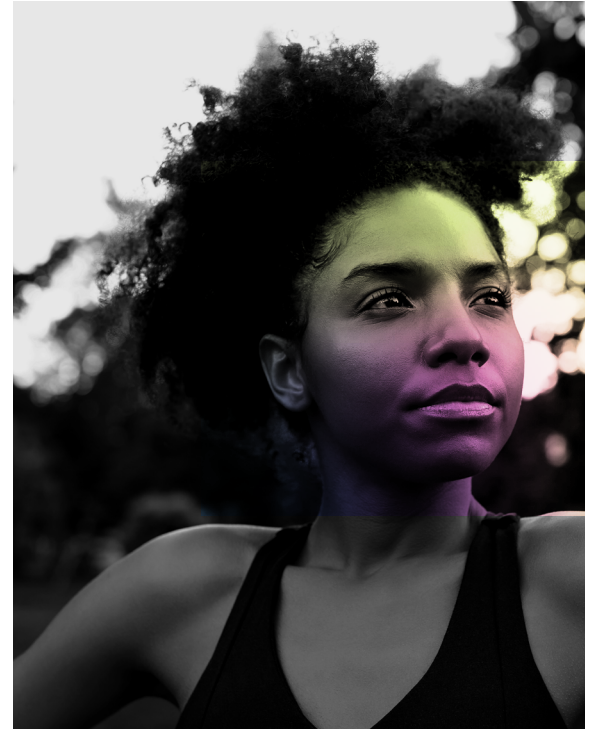
**FIRST, LET'S TAKE A BREATH.**

Because we know human trafficking can feel like a really heavy topic. It's big, and it's global, and it might have you wondering, "But what can I do about it?" Taking that first step—asking how you can help—is the beginning of something beautiful.

Just by picking up this booklet, you're already making a positive difference in the world. You're joining our amazing movement of individuals, organizations, and communities who are actively working to end human trafficking.

Together, we're building a world where we offer a hand, and help, and hope. Where we'll support survivors, be a safe place for those who are currently victims, and look out for each other to prevent it in the first place. Where we loudly declare we will not stand for this injustice.

**BECAUSE WE'RE ALL FOR, AND WE ALL ARE,  
HUMANS OVER HUMAN TRAFFICKING.**



# An introduction to the end.

Human trafficking is one of the most serious public health crises facing our world today.

**IT'S ALSO ONE OF THE MOST MISUNDERSTOOD.**

To define it: human trafficking is the illegal exploitation of individuals through force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of labor, services, or commercial sex.

Victims are manipulated or controlled—often through force, fraud and coercion—and forced to work against their will for the financial benefit of others. It affects people of all ages, all genders, and from all backgrounds. On average, it steals anywhere from 7-10 years of a victim's life. And it will take all of us to stop it.

We're asking you to join Humans Over Human Trafficking, a movement dedicated to building stronger communities and bolstering voices of survivors. To end human trafficking, we have to bring these conversations out of the shadows and into the light—and we need your help.



# It takes all of us to affect change.

**NO MATTER WHAT YOU'VE SEEN IN THE MOVIES,  
HUMAN TRAFFICKING ISN'T JUST A RANDOM,  
ISOLATED CRIME.**

Unfortunately, it can happen to anyone from  
anywhere—including here in Cuyahoga County.

Those who are most vulnerable to trafficking,  
though, are people who have experienced  
traumas like childhood abuse and neglect;  
homelessness, poverty, racial disparities,  
involvement in the child welfare system, or  
substance use disorder.

By addressing these root causes, we can help  
prevent—and end—human trafficking.

# Human trafficking is a cause worth caring about.

## **FREEDOM. IT'S A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT.**

Yet, across the world—and here in Cleveland, Ohio—this right has been taken from far too many who have been forced, deceived, and coerced into situations where they have no control. When there's an opportunity to stop this exploitation, we all have the moral obligation to do so.

Which is why we educate, advocate, and facilitate ways for organizations and individuals to work together and help restore freedom and dignity to all.





# Know the facts— and share them with friends.

**WHEN WE TALK ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING, WE HELP  
TO DISPEL MYTHS AND BREAK DOWN UNFAIR STIGMAS.**

They're really important conversations to have. And we want to help you get them right. So here, we're setting the record straight on some of the most common misconceptions.



10 Know the facts

| <b>MYTH</b>  | <b>FACT</b>   |
|--|---|
| Trafficking always involves kidnapping or abduction.   | It doesn't always start with a violent crime—most traffickers use psychological means such as manipulating, threatening, or defrauding victims into providing commercial sex or exploitative labor.   |
| Traffickers are strangers to their victims.  | Trafficking can start from a family member or as a relationship or friendship before abuse begins. 92% of people who are trafficked know their trafficker.  |
| Only women and girls are trafficked.   | Studies have shown that up to half of all trafficking victims are male. LGBTQ+ boys and young men are seen as particularly vulnerable to trafficking.   |
| Human trafficking involves moving, traveling, or transporting a person, and individuals are tied or chained up to be controlled. | Human trafficking is often confused with human smuggling, which involves illegal border crossings. In fact, the crime of human trafficking does not require any movement whatsoever. Survivors can be recruited and trafficked in their own home towns, even their own homes. |
| Human trafficking only happens in illegal or underground industries.   | Human trafficking cases have been reported and prosecuted in industries including restaurants, cleaning services, construction, factories, and more.  |




# Be dedicated to making a difference.

**WHEN IT COMES TO AN ISSUE THIS BIG, WE KNOW  
IT CAN FEEL INTIMIDATING TO GET STARTED.**

Or maybe you want to help, but you're not sure how. Here, we're sharing some of the ways you can contribute to end human trafficking.

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|-----------------|---|
| <b>IDENTIFY</b> | It's important to understand that there is no single "face" of trafficking. Survivors include children, adults, men, women, U.S. citizens, and foreign-born individuals. Trafficking can occur in various settings: on the street or online, in hotels, homes, illicit massage businesses, or restaurants. Victims may be exploited by romantic partners, family members, or employers.   |
| <b>ENGAGE</b>   | Oftentimes, people in human trafficking situations don't self-identify as "victims," nor will they fully comprehend the abuse. They may experience fear, shame, or confusion. So: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Be patient. Establishing trust is essential.</b></li><li>• <b>Ask compassionate questions like, "Is there any way I can help you?" or "Would you like me to contact the police?"</b></li><li>• <b>Provide local resources. Let them know help is available when they need it.</b></li></ul>  |
| <b>RESPOND</b>  | If you suspect human trafficking, do not intervene directly. Instead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Call 911 or local police if there is immediate danger.</b></li><li>• <b>Record observations. Note date, time, location, and details of both the victim and trafficker (appearance, ethnicity, vehicle information, etc.).</b></li><li>• <b>Report concerns to the authorities. You don't have to be sure—experts can assist. Trust your gut if you feel something is wrong.</b></li><li>• <b>Northeast Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force: (216) 443-6085</b></li></ul> |
| <b>JOIN</b>     | We welcome everyone to be part of Humans Over Human Trafficking. If your organization wants to join our amazing coalition of local partners, contact <a href="mailto:ematheny@collabtoendht.org">ematheny@collabtoendht.org</a> for more information. We so appreciate you putting your weight behind this cause and helping us to spread the word.   |



“Human trafficking is one of the most urgent crises facing our community today, and it will take all of us to stop it. By coming together, we can prevent exploitation, intervene in critical moments, and empower survivors—driving real, lasting change to build a safer and more just future for all of Greater Cleveland.”

**—KIRSTI MOUNCEY, PRESIDENT & CEO OF THE  
COLLABORATIVE TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

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## HOTLINES

**Northeast Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force** | (216) 443-6085 | For those who need non-emergency assistance from law enforcement, or who have information about potential trafficking occurring in the area.

**Bellefaire JCB Homeless and Missing Youth Hotline** | (216) 570-8010 | For those aged 10–21 who are at risk of homelessness and want help with basic needs, planning next steps, and connections to other resources.

**Cleveland Rape Crisis Center Human Trafficking Hotline** | (855) 431-7827 | For those who need trauma-informed crisis intervention, hospital and police advocacy, counseling services, and relocation support.



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The Collaborative to End Human Trafficking strengthens the community's capacity to address and prevent human trafficking. Through comprehensive education and training, we ensure that our community fully understands the scope and impact of this pervasive issue. As a leading convening partner, we unite organizations and advocates dedicated to taking collective action, driving coordinated efforts to tackle human trafficking as a pressing public health and human rights concern.

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## OUR PARTNERS

Abolition Bakery | ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County | Aloft Cleveland Downtown | Asian Services in Action, Inc. | Baldwin Wallace University | Beech Brook | Bellefaire JCB | Canopy Child Advocacy Center | Care Alliance | Case Western Reserve School of Law | City of Cleveland | Cleveland Clinic | Cleveland Division of Police | Cleveland Hope Exchange | Cleveland Leadership Center | Cleveland Municipal Court | Cleveland Rape Crisis Center | Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities | Cuyahoga County Board of Health | Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services | Cuyahoga County Executive's Office | Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court | Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office | Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Office | Cuyahoga County Witness Victim Service Center | Destination Cleveland | Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio | Empowered Network | Equal Employment Opportunity Commission - EEOC | Equality Ohio | Gracehaven | Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority | Greater Cleveland Youth for Christ | Harriet Tubman Movement | Hope Meadows Foundation | Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, CWRU | JayStarr Homes 2 Inc. | Jordan Community Resource Center | Junior Achievement of Greater Cleveland | The Junior League of Cleveland | The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland | LGBTQ Community Center of Greater Cleveland | Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry | The MetroHealth System | Moore Counseling & Mediation Services, Inc. | National Council of Jewish Women | Office of Congressman David Joyce | Office of Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost | Office of Senator Sherrod Brown | Ohio Department of Public Safety - Investigative Unit | Ohio Department of Youth Services | OHLA (Ohio Hotel & Lodging Association) | Ohio Network of Children's Advocacy Centers | Northeast Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force | North Olmsted (City of) | Pathway Caring for Children | Providence House | RAHAB Ministries | Radius Hospitality | Renee Jones Empowerment Center | Rotary Club of Strongsville | St. Vincent Charity Medical Center | The Salvation Army of Greater Cleveland | Signature Health | Sisters of Notre Dame of the United States | SMART Recovery USA | SOAP (Save Our Adolescents from Prostitution) | Strong Hands United | Strongsville Fire and Emergency Services | The Centers | Thrive Peer Support | The Village Network | University Hospitals | UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital | Ursuline College | U.S. Attorney's Office, N.D. Ohio | United States Marshals Service, Northern District of Ohio | Women's Recovery Center | YWCA of Cleveland



**TAKE THE PLEDGE AT [HUMANSOVERHT.COM](https://humansoverht.com)**