



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES
Office on Trafficking in Persons

Brief Introduction to Human Trafficking

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Mission and Priorities

Mission: to foster health and well-being by providing federal leadership, partnership and resources for the compassionate and effective delivery of human services.

Priorities:

Advancing **Equity** and Support for Underserved Communities

Prevention for child and family well-being

Whole-family strategies to increase financial stability and economic mobility

Support Communities in **Recovery**

Promote **Innovation**



Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Programs

Anti-Human Trafficking Programs

Child Care

Child Support Enforcement

Child Welfare

Head Start and Early Head Start

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Domestic Violence Programs

Native American Programs

Office of Community Services Programs

Refugee Programs

Runaway and Homeless Youth

Emergency Preparedness and Response

And many more!



Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP)

Mission

To combat human trafficking by supporting and leading systems that prevent trafficking through public awareness and protect victims through identification and assistance, helping them rebuild their lives and become self-sufficient.



What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is a **public health concern** that impacts individuals, families, and communities across generations.

- **Labor Trafficking**

Forced labor. Individuals are compelled to work or provide services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion.

- **Sex Trafficking**

Commercial sex. Individuals are compelled to engage in commercial sex through the use of force, fraud, or coercion. When a person under 18 years old is compelled to perform a commercial sex act, it is a crime regardless of whether there is any force, fraud, or coercion.

Who is at risk?

Individuals from any class, religious, cultural, or ethnic group can be targeted in human trafficking schemes. The following groups are especially vulnerable:

Individuals who have experienced childhood abuse or neglect	Migrant workers
Children and youth involved in the foster care and juvenile justice systems	Undocumented immigrants
People experiencing homelessness	Racial and ethnic minorities
American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders	People with disabilities
Survivors of violence	People with low incomes
2SLGBTQIA+ Individuals	People with a history of substance abuse
	Communities exposed to intergenerational trauma

Where does trafficking occur?

Trafficking can happen anywhere, from illicit markets to legal industries like hospitality, construction, agriculture, or domestic services.

Who are the traffickers?

Traffickers can be any gender or age – some are strangers, while others are peers, friends, romantic partners, or family members.

What the signs that someone may be experiencing trafficking?

Physical Health

Frequent treatment for sexually transmitted infections

Multiple pregnancies/abortions

Dental issues

Signs of self-harm

Respiratory issues

Physical and sexual abuse

High number of sexual partners

Exposure to toxic chemicals

Bruising and burns

Weight loss or malnourishment

Suicide attempts

What the signs that someone may be experiencing trafficking?

Behavioral Health

Confusing/contradicting stories

Unaware of current date, location, or time

Minimizes abuse

Suicidal ideations

Aggressive, antagonistic, or defensive

Post-traumatic stress disorder

Depressed

Inability to focus or concentrate

Protects person who hurt them

Guilt and shame about experiences

Extreme timidity

Heightened stress response

Withdrawn



What the signs that someone may be experiencing trafficking?

Social/Environmental

Absent from school

Sudden increase in substance use

Age-inappropriate romantic partner

Repeat runaway

Evidence of being controlled

Lives at worksite

Failing grades

Change in dress

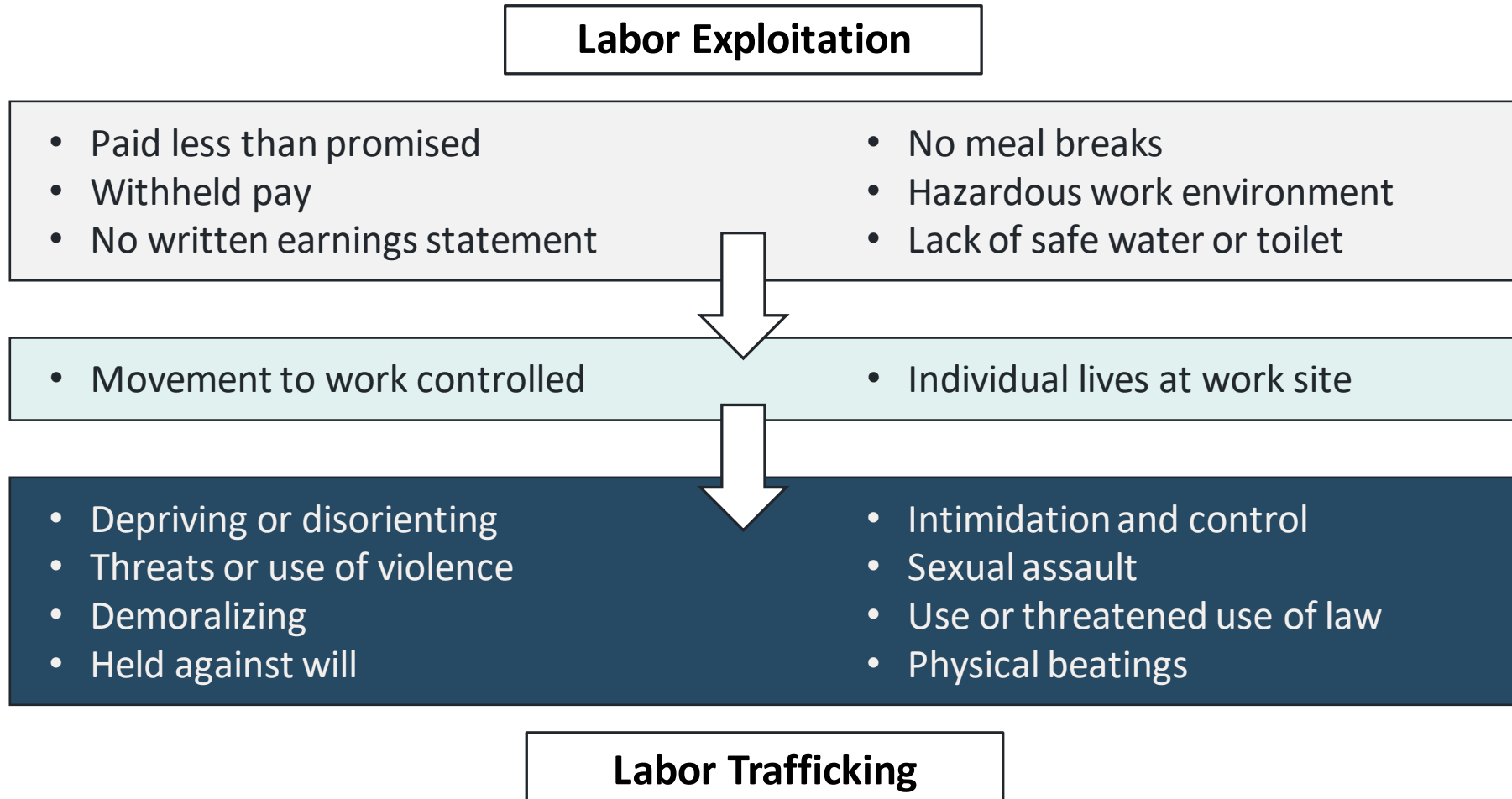
Change in friends

Not able to speak for oneself or share information

Wears inappropriate clothing for the weather

Multiple people in cramped living space

Labor Trafficking vs. Labor Exploitation

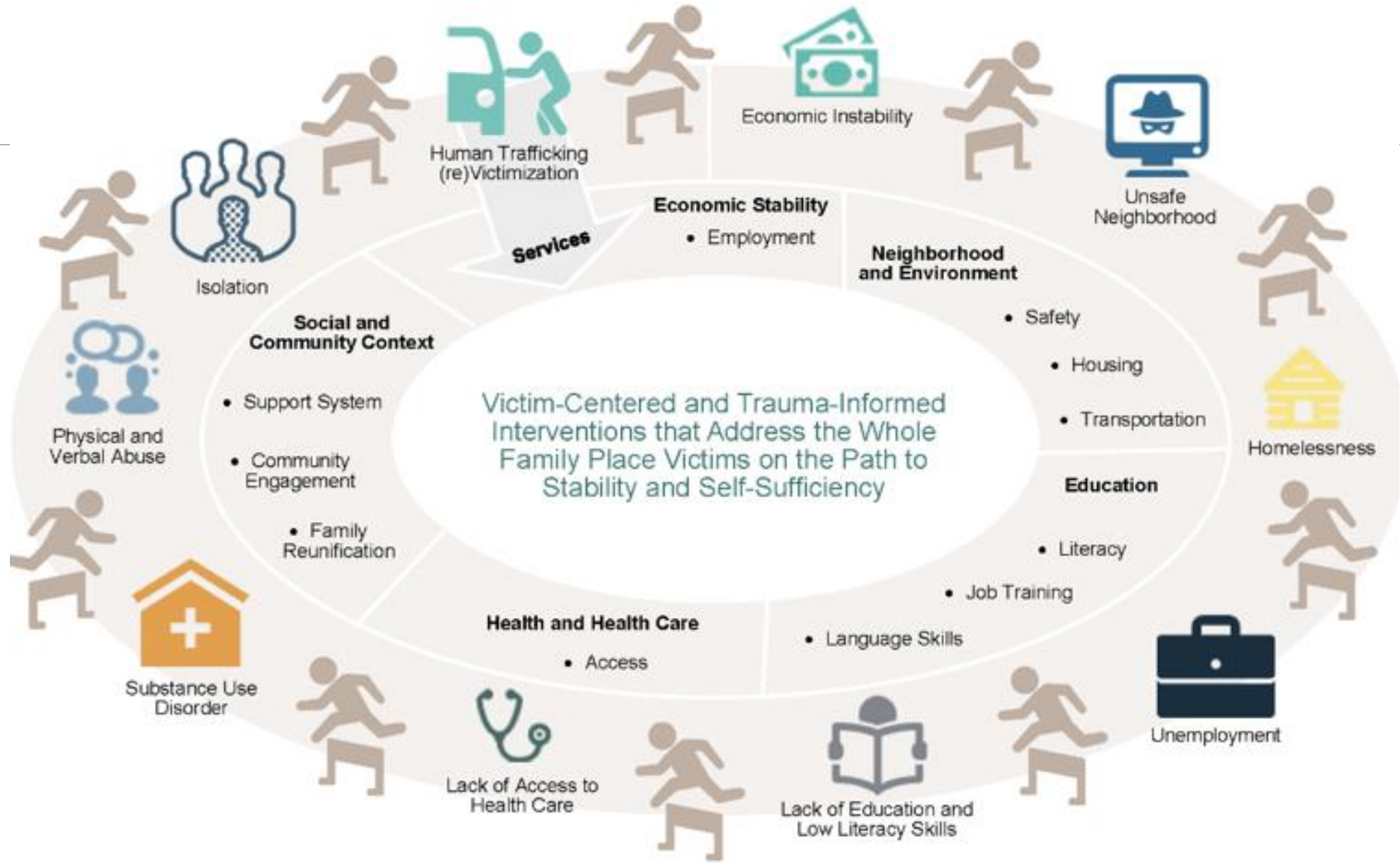


Human Trafficking and Health Care

“Most trafficking victims will have contact with health care during their exploitation including at primary care, reproductive health clinics, medical specialities, mental health, substance use disorder treatment, or most often, emergency departments”

–Polaris Project

A public health approach to human trafficking



Approach to Addressing the Social Determinants of Health in Human Trafficking Victims

- S** **Safety and Security**— Provide victims with access to law enforcement, mental health services, and legal services.
- H** **Basic Human Needs**—Assist victims in securing basic necessities such as food, clothing, and housing.
- A** **Health Care Access**—Ensure victims have access to affordable, quality care to address emergency and ongoing health needs.
- P** **Permanent Connections**—Implement family reunification and other strategies to restore victims' social and community ties.
- E** **Education and Employment**—Connect victims with the education and employment opportunities they need to support themselves and their families.



Contact

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