



# January 11th

## National Awareness Day:

### Human Trafficking — Modern Slavery

# Slavery in the USA today?

**Yes! Today the US government estimates that 14,000 people are trafficked annually into the U.S. through deception, fraud and coercion.**

**These people are promised good-paying jobs, but are then held against their will or are forced to work for little or no pay.**

Those enslaved in the USA may be working in many venues. Indentured slaves can be found in sweatshops (clothing manufacturing), in commercial agriculture settings (fields, processing plants, canneries), in ordinary neighborhoods (maids, baby sitters), on construction sites, in restaurants and as custodial workers, or in the sex industry (under the guise of massage parlors, escort services, adult bookstores, modeling studios, or bars and strip clubs).

*“When we hear ‘sex trafficking,’ as Americans we don’t usually think close to home — Americans trafficked by Americans.*

*I was 14 years old when I was forced into prostitution. Like many teens, finding my own identity and defying my parents was top on my list. So when a man I met showered me with attention and listened to my complaints about my parents, I did not think twice that he was ten years my senior. After all, he said I was mature for my age. Little did I know, he was laying down the seeds of manipulation. After six months, I thought I loved him, so I ran away to be with him. We ended up in Cleveland, OH. He told me we were going to meet the rest of his family.*

*I had no idea the ‘family’ meant three other girls. I was told what my role would be. I would go out to ‘work’ that night and bring him back the money. He assured me he would always love me, but he needed to know how much I loved him by making sure I would do anything for him.*

*What happened to me 15 years ago is still going on today and it is not getting any better - it is only getting worse. We see girls and young women every night being forced onto the streets, beaten, and raped to make money for the pimps.*

**Open your eyes to the violence and control pimps and sex traffickers exercise over their victims, who are mostly girls and young women. You are needed to help end this terrible crime against America’s youth! If you see something suspicious, call the toll-free 24/7 National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline 1.888.373.7888**

**Globally 27 million people are enslaved. That number is equivalent to the entire population of our neighbor, Canada.**

- **Slaves may have made the bricks that were used to build the factory that assembled the TV you watch.**
- **Slaves in Latin America may have made the charcoal used to temper the steel that made the springs in your car and the blades in your lawnmower.**
- **Child slaves may have picked the coffee beans that were roasted to supply your morning cup of coffee.**
- **A young girl may have been sold into a brothel in Asia to be resold every night, earning \$10,000 for her owner but only misery, abuse and illness for herself.**
- **A 7-year old Pakistani boy may have been one who spent 10-14 hours per day chained to a rug-weaving loom to help make the carpet in your home.**



1 in 7 teenagers in the USA run away from home.



Living on the streets, 1 out of every 3 teens will be lured into prostitution within 48 hours of leaving home. The longer they are gone, the more likely they are to engage in “survival sex.”



After three months away from home, 90 percent of children will turn to sex. (National Incidence Studies of Missing, Runaway and Throwaway Children)

*NB: Youth involved in commercial sex are being trafficked according to the U.S. federal law against human trafficking.*

**Gildardo Ferreira, a native Mexican, responded to an ad for a restaurant job that promised \$2,100 a month, plus room and board, for washing trays.**

**He was picked up with a van having no windows and taken to the China Star Buffet in Muskegon, MI. There an employer put him in the basement lined with bunk beds.**

**“The house was so dirty,” Ferreira said. “We all had to share one small bathroom that was disgusting. I can’t put into words how horrible the conditions were.”**

**The workers were forced to work 14-hour days, washing pots using intolerably hot water. To prevent burns they had to buy their own gloves. After some weeks, Ferreira was abruptly awakened, informed he had been fired, and thrown out. When he demanded his wages, he was beaten and told to be quiet or worse would happen.**