

Faces of Human Trafficking: A Multidisciplinary Approach

This video highlights task force and other multidisciplinary initiatives, demonstrating the collaborations needed to serve victims of trafficking effectively, bring traffickers to justice, and build the community's capacity. It is intended for legal and social service providers; law enforcement; federal, state, and local prosecutors; Child Advocacy Centers; Victims of Crime Act administrators; allied professionals; and the broader community.

Key Points

- Victims receive better services through established collaborative relationships. It is best to establish these relationships before you encounter a victim so that the groundwork is already in place when you need the help.
- Collaboration is not always easy, but it is necessary to ensure that victims' needs are fully met.
- Multidisciplinary teams need to clearly define their purpose (addressing all types of trafficking victims versus a specific subgroup only, such as labor trafficking) so that they can engage the appropriate people.
- It is important for multidisciplinary teams to establish roles and build trust among members. Team members need to acknowledge their different roles and limitations, respect the importance of each member's contribution to the team, and understand why members will sometimes have contradictory objectives in a particular case.
- Service providers are critically important to the core of a multidisciplinary team or task force. Law enforcement partners need to find ways to build trust with service providers so that they can work together effectively to support victims, once cases are discovered.
- Capacity must be built at the local level. The community response to human trafficking should be tailored to local needs.
- It is important to assess your community for industries where there could be victims, vulnerable populations, or a lack of victim resources. By doing this, you will know which partners to engage.

“It's all about planning to serve—looking at your challenges, looking at your area of expertise, and working together.”

— Mychell Mitchell
FBI Victim Specialist
Memphis, Tennessee

Discussion Questions

1. Why is a multidisciplinary approach so important to helping victims of human trafficking?
2. In what industries might you find human trafficking? What are the specific industries or settings in your community that might be vulnerable to human trafficking?
3. What services might a survivor of human trafficking need once they are out of the exploitive situation? What are the specific needs of victims who are minors; male; female; individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer; American Indians and Alaska Natives; foreign nationals; or U.S. citizens?
4. Who in your community is currently serving victims of human trafficking? Does your community have specific organizations that work on this issue? Does your community, tribe, or state have a human trafficking task force or coalition?
5. What are some of the best legal and social service providers for other crime victims (such as domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse) in your community, and what expertise might they bring to developing a comprehensive approach to serving victims of human trafficking?
6. What specialized law enforcement teams exist in your community (such as Internet Crimes Against Children Task Forces, Innocence Lost Initiative Task Forces, and Child Advocacy Centers) and what expertise might they bring to developing a comprehensive approach to addressing human trafficking?
7. In your professional work, who can you collaborate with to strengthen the community response to human trafficking? Local partners? Federal partners?
8. If you are on a task force or coalition, what are some of your areas of strength? How can the task force or coalition be improved?
9. What can you do with the knowledge that you have gained today?

Supplemental Training Materials

- Provide the federal definition, from the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, of “a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons” and “sex trafficking” (found at 22 U.S.C. 7102).
- Provide a brief history of modern human trafficking legislation in the United States, including the TVPA of 2000 and its reauthorizations, the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015, and relevant legislation in your state.
- Describe trafficking cases that have been successfully prosecuted in your area and the role that service providers played in supporting the victims before, during, and after the investigation and prosecution.
- Describe how relationships were built, sustained, and challenged during the human trafficking investigation and prosecution, and what lessons were learned to improve the partnership moving forward. Describe the systems and resources currently available in your community (including gaps and challenges) for different subgroups of trafficking victims, such as minors; males; females; individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer; foreign nationals; and U.S. citizens?

For more information, including additional training resources, please visit www.ovc.gov/trafficking or www.ovcttac.gov/taskforceguide.