

MYTHS VS. FACTS



Read the statements aloud and have students determine whether each is a myth or a fact. Afterwards, briefly discuss the information presented.

MYTH or FACT:



Sex trafficking is the most prominent type of trafficking.

MYTH: Sex trafficking and labor trafficking are both common. It is difficult to say which is more widespread because statistics and data are difficult to gather, and some existing research is limited.

MYTH or FACT:



Sex trafficking is not the same as prostitution.

FACT: Sex trafficking of adults requires force, fraud, or coercion. Individuals engaging in commercial sex may experience trafficking, but prostitution may not involve force, fraud, or coercion. In addition, there is no such thing as a child prostitute. If an adult is paying to have sex with a minor, that adult is engaging in criminal activity, and that child is a victim of human trafficking.

MYTH or FACT:



Perpetrators of sex trafficking usually exploit people they know.

FACT: Perpetrators often target people they know. They can be family members, friends, romantic partners, and acquaintances. In addition, traffickers who begin as strangers will usually form some type of relationship with people they are targeting to earn their trust before attempting to traffic them.

MYTH or FACT:



People who experience trafficking are usually kidnapped or confined by their traffickers.

MYTH: Traffickers often know the people they exploit. In some situations, they work to build relationships with targets, gaining their confidence only to use that trust to exploit them. Survivors may be reluctant to contact law enforcement because they believe they will be prosecuted; traffickers may reinforce these thoughts to discourage survivors from seeking help.

MYTH or FACT:



Only girls and women can be victims and survivors of sex trafficking.

MYTH: Men and boys can experience sex trafficking as well. While we don't know exactly what percentage of victims identify as male, we do know that male victims are less likely to be identified.

MYTH or FACT:



Human trafficking and smuggling are different crimes.

FACT: Human smuggling involves illegally transporting people across international borders. Human trafficking doesn't require any transportation or movement of the person, and it doesn't usually involve kidnapping.

MYTH or FACT:



Labor trafficking is only a problem in other countries.

MYTH: Labor trafficking is a global issue and does occur in the U.S. and other developed countries.

MYTH or FACT:



People in active trafficking situations may not want help getting out.

FACT: Sometimes, people who are being trafficked don't identify as victims or survivors of human trafficking. Even if they do, they may be reluctant to seek help for many reasons: they could be experiencing emotional manipulation by the trafficker, they may feel afraid, isolated, or embarrassed, or they may have concerns that make asking for help more challenging.

MYTH or FACT:



Labor trafficking only involves agriculture.

MYTH: Labor trafficking can occur in any industry that involves forced labor. Some industries where labor trafficking may happen include construction, restaurants, nail salons, traveling sales crews, zoos, and even in the technology sector.

MYTH or FACT:



Labor trafficking only involves stolen wages.

MYTH: Labor trafficking also encompasses coercive work environments where an individual is unable to leave. Coercive work environments often include managers using threatening language, lack of access to personal protective equipment, stolen documentation, inability to contact loved ones, and restricted breaks.

References

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