

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Maryland Regional Navigator Program connects youth survivors of sex and labor trafficking (up to age 24) with trauma-informed services and support. Each county has a designated Navigator who helps coordinate care, including safety planning, case management, housing, mental health services, and legal support.

Navigators work closely with partners like CAC's, law enforcement, DSS, hospitals, and schools to ensure survivors are identified quickly and receive the help they need. They also provide training and consultation to professionals on how to recognize and respond to trafficking.

The program also supports youth at high risk for trafficking, including those with a history of running away, unstable housing, involvement in the child welfare or juvenile justice systems, or who have engaged in concerning exploitative behaviors. Referrals can come from professionals, caregivers, or the youth themselves. Services are voluntary and tailored to each individual's needs.

**Scan to find your
local Regional Navigator!**



SIGNS OF TRAFFICKING

Red Flags

- Truancy
- Homelessness or "couch surfing"
- Multiple cell-phones
- Extreme CSAM participation
- Frequent runaway
- Substance abuse
- Selling illicit substances



Risk Factors

- History of abuse or neglect
- Involvement in child welfare system
- Involvement in DJS
- High risk populations: LGBTQIA+, Immigrants, Visa holders

Labor Trafficking

Labor Trafficking is the use of force, fraud, or coercion to exploit someone for labor or services. Youth may be trafficked in various industries and often don't recognize they are victims. Fear, lack of legal status, or threats may prevent them from seeking help.

Possible Indicators:

- Long hours with little or no pay
- Threats of harm or deportation
- Living and working in the same location
- Confiscated ID or documents
- Restricted movement or constant control
- Owed debt to employer or recruiter
- Signs of abuse, exhaustion, or fear
- False promises about job or conditions
- Forced criminality



REGIONAL NAVIGATOR PROGRAM



ASSISTING YOUTH
VICTIMS OF SEX &
LABOR TRAFFICKING
ACROSS MARYLAND



WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

"Human trafficking" is the illegal trading of human beings for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation or forced labor. It is the fastest growing criminal industry in the world.



SEX TRAFFICKING

A commercial sex act induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or if the person performing the act is under 18 years old.



LABOR TRAFFICKING

Recruitment or obtaining of a person for labor or service through use of force, fraud, or coercion.

If you know someone who has experienced:

- Forced sexual acts
- IDs or documents taken away or destroyed
- Threats from or in debt to their boss
- Money controlled by another
- Isolation from family or the community
- Threats of or being controlled by violence
- ...They may be a trafficking victim!

What is CSAM?

CSAM (Child Sexual Abuse Material) is any visual depiction of sexually explicit conduct involving a minor. It is a form of child sexual exploitation and is often linked to grooming, coercion, and trafficking. Youth engaged in concerning or extreme CSAM behaviors—or exchanging CSAM for items of value—should be referred to a Regional Navigator for assessment and services.

Child Sex Trafficking

Exchange of Sex Acts for items of value

- Money, in-game currency
- A place to stay, a ride somewhere
- Food, clothes, jewelry, purses, etc.
- Alcohol, cannabis, illicit substances
- Social status, social media followers
- Good grades, academic favors
- Protection or safety from violence
- Immigration help or legal documents

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN MARYLAND

Maryland's central location and transportation routes make it a 'hot spot' for human trafficking. Here are three key reasons:

- 1** Highways like I-95 connect the state to major cities on the East Coast
- 2** Rest areas, truck stops, and bus stations are common sites of exploitation
- 3** Traffickers bring victims through BWI and other nearby airports



Both victims and traffickers have told law enforcement that Maryland is a 'goldmine' for human trafficking.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING FACTS



Human trafficking is now the 2nd highest grossing criminal enterprise (UNODC).



Males and gender nonconforming individuals are victims.



Victims are not always foreign born.



Minors and adults are victims.



Trafficking does not require movement across a state line or international borders.



Victims are from wealthy and poor families.



It does not always require the exchange of money.

Law Enforcement & DSS

The *Child Sex Trafficking Screening and Services Act of 2019* established the *Regional Navigator Program (RNPG)*. The primary purpose of this program is to develop a network of regional navigators to coordinate and/or provide identified or confirmed child sex trafficking victims with specific services, as outlined in the Act. It also **requires law enforcement and local departments of social services**, who have reason to believe a certain child is a victim of sex trafficking, to **notify a regional navigator** in their jurisdiction to obtain needed services for the child.