**What is human trafficking?**

**Federal statutes** (2000): 18 U.S.C. 1591, 2421, 2422, 2423;

**Kentucky Statutes** (2007): KRS 529.010, KRS 529.100, KRS 529.110

Trafficking of children is generally understood to be:

The recruitment, enticement, harboring, transporting, provision or obtaining of a child for labor or services (including attempts) through the use of force, fraud, or coercion. Under federal and state laws, sex trafficking is any commercial sex (prostitution, pornography, or stripping) involving a minor and does not require there to be force, fraud, or coercion if the victim is under 18. The commercial exchange may be money, drugs, shelter, food, jewelry, gifts, or other items of commercial value.

Trafficking victims may be:

* Smuggled into and within the United States;
* Arrive with a legitimate visa; or
* Be a US citizen.

Trafficking occurs in many different situations such as domestic servitude, farm work, door to door magazine or candy sales, and various areas of the sex industry, including prostitution at truck stops, hotels, or private homes, strip clubs, escort services, familial prostitution, etc.

**Some rights given to minor victims of human trafficking:**

* They are not culpable for crimes committed as a direct result of their victimization;
* They are not to be arrested for prostitution or other “masking” offenses (runaway, truant, out of control);
* They should not be detained in facilities inappropriate to their status as crime victims.

In Kentucky, a report of human trafficking involving a minor is grounds for a child welfare response, regardless of whether the alleged trafficker is the parent, custodial guardian, or non-caretaker.

Any minor in juvenile detention who discloses human trafficking in their history may have the right to have their case brought back before a judge for re-assessment, and be routed to appropriate services.

**Potential signs that a child is a victim of human trafficking:**

* Shows signs of physical, mental or sexual abuse;
* Has unexplained absences from school for a period of time (truant) or is not in school;
* Multiple reports of runaway incidents with no explanation as to whereabouts;
* Makes references to frequent travel to other cities or states;
* Exhibits withdrawn behavior, depression or other sudden change in behavior;
* Is hungry/malnourished or inappropriately dressed (based on weather conditions or surroundings);
* Shows signs of drug addiction or reports being given drugs by a male peer/older male;
* Has engaged in prostitution or other commercial sex acts (money or something else of value was exchanged for the sex act);
* Tattoos/branding that may indicate ownership (may be name of pimp/trafficker or other image such as a heart or star, often on wrist, chest, or neck);
* Appears to have a well-rehearsed story or talks in a way that doesn’t sound like someone of their age would when questioned;
* A sudden change in attire, behavior or possessions (has expensive items);
* Makes references to sexual situations that are beyond age-specific norms;
* Has a “boyfriend” who is noticeably older and/or receiving phone calls from older males;
* Uses language such as “in the life”, “daddy” (referring to boyfriend), “wife -in -law” (refers to other trafficked girl), “stable”, “bottom girl, or “quota.”
* History of STDs, pregnancies, or abortions;
* Has been labeled as a “slut,” “whore” or “skank” by her peers;
* Is in possession of items such as hotel access key cards, multiple phones, condoms, cards with phone numbers/names, false IDs, poker chips/tokens, etc.

**What to do if you suspect or discover that a child is being trafficked:**

* Refer to DCBS standards of practice for human trafficking;
* Contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline and Resource Center at 1-888-3737-888 to inform them of the case, and to get in touch with local human trafficking advocates and services;
* Contact Catholic Charities of Louisville, 502-974-4947 or visit [www.rescueandrestoreky.org](http://www.rescueandrestoreky.org) for more information on the topic.

**Human Trafficking Case Examples:**

The following scenarios may involve some form of human trafficking, or may be situations in which victims and/or traffickers could be found:

* Prostitution rings;
* Operations of massage parlors, strip clubs, etc.;
* Encounters with migrant workers where a foreman or supervisor attempts to keep the group away from the law enforcement officers or attempts to control all communication between the officer and the group;
* Crimes involving immigrant children in situations such as prostitution or forced labor.

**Scenario #1:**

Jamie is a 13 year old girl from Nelson County, Kentucky who has been in and out of detention for status offenses, including runaway and beyond parental control. While at the local mall, Jamie was approached by a 23 year old woman named Tonya, who told Jamie she could stay with her in Louisville where she lives with several other girls. Jamie agreed and went.

Once in Louisville, Tonya took Jamie to an apartment where three older men lived. Jamie was given alcohol and ecstasy. She was given lingerie to wear; pictures were taken of her and posted online. She was taken to a local hotel where she was expected to have sex with any of the men that came through. The police went undercover at a hotel to meet with her and interview her. They determined she is a victim of trafficking and notified victim services for assistance.

**Scenario #2:**

Katie, who has been nicknamed “Princess,” is arrested by a Kentucky State Police trooper at a truck stop, next to the Racers Strip Club and across from Kentucky Speedway, for disorderly conduct and prostitution after a complaint from a passer-by. Her ID has a picture of someone else on it and shows her age to be 22; however she appears much younger. Upon investigation, the officer discovers that she is only 16. He attempts to contact her parents, but no one will come to pick her up. She is combative, high on meth and is yelling at the officers. She denies having a pimp or trafficker.