

Not Alone: Working Together in the Fight Against Human Trafficking

What is human trafficking?

Kathy McGibbon-Givens - Sex Trafficking Survivor and Advocate:

My name is Katherine McGibbon Givens.

Juan Carlos Jiménez Luna - Labor Trafficking Survivor and Advocate:

[in Spanish] My name is Juan Carlos Jiménez.

Sophia Strother - Sex Trafficking Survivor and Advocate:

My name is Sophia Strother.

Allison Franklin - Sex Trafficking Survivor and Advocate:

Allison Franklin.

Toni McKinley - Sex Trafficking Survivor and Advocate:

Toni McKinley.

Evelyn Chumbow - Labor Trafficking Survivor and Advocate:

My name is Evelyn Chumbow.

Kathy McGibbon-Givens: And I am a survivor of human trafficking.

[soft music]

Kristen Abrams - Senior Director of Human Trafficking - The McCain Institute:

So there are two main types of trafficking that we at the Institute work on: sex trafficking and labor trafficking.

Kathy McGibbon-Givens: Trafficking does not target people, trafficking targets vulnerabilities.

Toni McKinley: So my vulnerability of just being a young kid put me really in a spot that I couldn't fight and get away from.

Sophia Strother: It was through a parent that utilized me to secure drugs and funds for her.

Allison Franklin: There were a number of factors that made me vulnerable to trafficking. One was childhood sexual abuse, that convolutes our ideas of what love is.

Kristen Abrams: Migrants are vulnerable to labor trafficking, people who work in low wage industries tend to be more vulnerable.

Juan Carlos: [in Spanish] And so that's how the "coyotes" or traffickers identify us—they see that we have financial needs, that we want to succeed and everything. They tell us everything is wonderful here and that is how they capture us and bring us here.

Evelyn Chumbow: I just remember one day coming back from school my uncle and his wife telling me that oh there's a lady that wants to adopt me and take me to America. Never once did I think that I would come to America and be a victim of modern day slavery.

Daniella Alvarado Pérez - Senior Prevention Advisory Specialist - Love 146:

A lot of people think of a trafficker to be like a creepy man. In reality a trafficker and a perpetrator of violence could be anyone.

Kathy McGibbon-Givens: Whether it's someone in their family, whether it's someone in my case like that was a boyfriend, most of the time it's happening with someone that you trust.

Toni McKinley: I didn't know anyone to reach out for help. And when it's a retired police officer, who do you reach out for help?

Kathy McGibbon-Givens: It is extremely difficult to leave a trafficking situation because of the hold that the traffickers have on you.

Sophia Strother: You can be caged in the mental environment of being trafficked for years.

Kathy McGibbon-Givens: I often say that all it takes is one look behind me and trafficking is right there. So it's a daily fight and a daily walk, but it's a beautiful process because every day is one step away from what I walked away from.