



Domestic & Sexual Violence Intersections with Trafficking

Issue Brief

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What are the Intersections?

Methods of Abuse: power and control exist in domestic and sexual violence as well as trafficking. Similarly, victims are subject to physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and economic abuse as well as isolation.

Cycle of Violence: traffickers, like abusers, use cyclical violence to control victims by making promises of love or a better life and by using shame and manipulation.

Continuum of Abuse or “Push Factor”: domestic and sexual violence are often cited as push factors to trafficking.

Trafficking by Intimate Partners & Family: traffickers can be those closest to a victim, including their spouse, intimate partner or family member.

Relevant Statistics

- Nearly **70 % of trafficking victims** at a London program female victims reported experiencing abuse before being trafficked.¹
- In 2011, the NHTRC reported **10% of hotline calls** as Intimate Partner or Familial Trafficking.²
- **94%** of IPV victims have experienced some form of economic abuse, **79%** economic exploitation.³

Myths about the Intersections

Myth = Traffickers are always strangers to victims, using kidnapping to acquire victims.

Reality = Like sexual abusers, traffickers are also known to victims, including family or partners.

Myth = Abusers are jealous and won't exploit for sex. Abusers control economically, but don't exploit.

Reality = In the same way abusers use economic & sexual abuse to control, they may use it to exploit.

¹ <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2009/123128.htm>

² http://polarisproject.adobeconnect.com/dvsahnt_intersections/

³ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21987509>

⁴ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/03/17/clinton-danner-sold-his-w_n_503358.html

Intimate Partner Trafficking

Spouses and intimate partners may compel their partner to engage in commercial sex, forced labor or involuntary servitude. The abuser may tell their partner that this exploitation is for benefit of their family, the relationship, for financial support or to support an addiction.

Familial Trafficking

Family members, often adults or older individuals, may compel their relatives to engage in commercial sex, forced labor or involuntary servitude. The abuser utilizes existing power dynamics and vulnerabilities to exploit the family member.

“A woman feared she would never see her young child again unless she complied with her husband’s scheme to sell her sexual services....”⁴

Indicators & Assessment

- **Signs** of control, monitoring, isolation, canned stories, financial dependence, anxiety about sexual history or work responsibilities
- Has s/he ever asked you to do something you were uncomfortable with?
- Are you being monitored or watched by him/her?
- What do you think would happen if you didn't do what s/he asked you to do?
- Are you able to keep any of the money you earn or have access to finances?

Resources

National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) Hotline:

1-888-373-7888

National Domestic Violence Hotline:

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network Hotline:

1-800-656-HOPE (4673)