



Mass General Freedom Clinic for Trafficking Survivors

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Human Trafficking Globally

- 20.9 million persons worldwide
(\pm 1.4 million, 68% CI)
(ILO, 2012)
- \$150 billion USD per year
(“Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labor.” ILO, 2014)
- Reliable data is difficult due to the illegal, often invisible nature of trafficking.

Human Trafficking in the U.S.

- Trafficking does not always involve movement
- 33% of the traffickers are immediate family members
- HT Reporting System data between 2008-2010:
 - 83% of confirmed sex trafficking victims were US citizens
 - 95% of confirmed labor trafficking victims were undocumented (67%) or qualified aliens (28%)
 - 87% of sex trafficking victims under the age of 25 (55% <18 years old)
 - Majority women; men and transgender also affected

(Banks and Kyckelhahn, US Dept of Justice, 2011; Covenant House study, 2013)



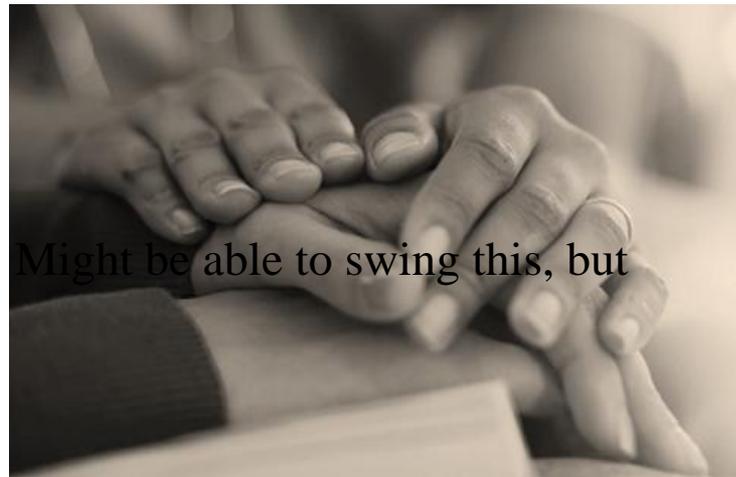
Risk Factors

Circumstances that **lead to a higher vulnerability:**

- Family dysfunction
- Financial insecurity
- Child abuse / neglect
- Runaway / “throwaway” youth
- Homelessness
- Substance use
- Migrants / immigrants
- Gender / sexual diverse persons
- Foster / group home placements



Role of the Health Sector



Up to 87.8% of trafficking survivors report encounters with health care professionals

(FVPP, 2005; Baldwin et al, 2011; Lederer & Wetzel, 2014)

Health Outcomes

Physical health	Reproductive health	Mental health
Intentional traumatic injuries (e.g., fractures, cuts, disfigurement) and chemical/thermal burns	Vaginal, perineal, and rectal injuries (e.g., secondary rape/gang rape, foreign object use)	Stockholm syndrome (i.e., traumatic bonding with perpetrator)
Accidental traumatic and overuse injuries (e.g., joint sprains, disc herniations, muscles tears, eye strain)	Sexually-transmitted infections (e.g., HIV, HPV, GC, Chlamydia, Hepatitis B/C)	Affective disorders (e.g., anxiety, depression, panic attacks)
Chemical (e.g., pesticides, industrial glues) and environmental exposures (e.g., heat exhaustion, vision/hearing impairment)	Diseases due to untreated STIs (e.g., AIDS, cervical cancer, PID, infertility, liver disease, hepatocellular cancer)	Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD; symptoms include flashbacks, intrusive thoughts, memory difficulties, hyper-vigilance) and complex PTSD
Communicable diseases (e.g., Hepatitis A, intestinal parasites, typhoid, TB)	Poor access to barrier protection or other contraception	Dissociative disorders, involving varying degrees of detachment from self/reality
Untreated chronic diseases (e.g., anemia, cancer, CKD, CVD, DM, HTN)	Forced sterilization or use of contraceptive devices	Sleep disorders (e.g., sleep disturbances, nightmares, insomnia)
Poor oral health and injuries (e.g., tooth decay/fractures, mandibular dislocations)	Unplanned and high-risk pregnancies	Psychosomatic syndromes (e.g., chronic pain, fatigue, GI distress, headaches, dizziness)
Dehydration, malnutrition, and eating disorders	Unsafe, forced abortions	Low self-esteem, shame, guilt, self-blame, self-loathing, hopelessness, anti-social, learned helplessness, loss of identity/agency
Branding/tattooing and skin disorders (e.g., lice, scabies, mycoses)	Abortion-related complications	Forced or coerced substance use disorders
Substance use disorder complications	Forced pregnancy and childbirth	High-risk and self-injurious behaviors
Homicide and accidental death (e.g., fatal trauma)	Lack of prenatal care, including vertical HIV transmission prevention	Suicide and accidental death (e.g., drug overdose)

(Macias-Konstantopoulos, 2016, *Ann Int Med*)



Stigma & Complex Trauma

out of control
truant deviant
promiscuous
needs to be set straight
Sex trafficked
prostitute misbehaved
misguided bad influence
troubled

Trauma-Informed Care

- Reduce re-traumatization
- Promote healing and recovery
- Highlight strengths and resiliency (empower)
- Support the development of healthy coping mechanisms
- Understand behavior:
 - ask “What happened to you?” instead of “What’s wrong with you?”
- Manage our own reactions!



Mass General Freedom Clinic



Dorothea Lange Photograph, "Migrant Mother", 1936.
No use restrictions (the Farm Security Admin/Office
of War Information Prints & Photographs Division).

Freedom Clinic Founding

Partnership for Freedom Humanity United

162 ideas from over 260 organizations across
39 states to improve services for human trafficking
victims and end modern day slavery



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL



PARTNERSHIP
for **FREEDOM**

MODERN SOLUTIONS TO MODERN DAY SLAVERY



HUMANITY
UNITED



Freedom Clinic Overview

- Unmarked referral-only clinic providing free primary, preventative health care clinic for survivors of human trafficking ages 13 years and older (est. April 2015)
- Strengths-based, trauma-informed approach to patient care that empowers individuals and encourages self-care behaviors
- Providing holistic care with a focus on healing/recovery from trauma

Freedom Clinic Services

- Services are delivered in integrated fashion from a strengths perspective in a safe, trauma-informed, LGBTQ-friendly, and judgment-free environment.
 - Primary and preventative care
 - Annual physical exams
 - Vaccinations
 - Medical clearance evaluations
 - Mental health
 - Dental care
 - Substance use treatment
 - ID testing and treatment (STIs/HIV)
 - Referrals to network of trauma-informed MGH subspecialists
 - Case management: community resource connections

Freedom Clinic Philosophy



I am a strong person,
but every now and then
I need someone to
hold my hand
and tell me
everything will be alright.



Freedom Clinic Approach

When interacting with patients, we do so with:

- Compassion
- Patience
- Respect
- Sensitivity to beliefs (cultural, religious, other)
- Attention to healthy therapeutic relationships – encourage healthy coping mechanisms and avoid destabilization & retraumatization



Freedom Clinic Patient Care

When hearing about stories of abuse, we strive to:

- Listen empathically
- Be present in the moment
- Be mindful of body language (power dynamics)
- Accept our limited role
- Avoid passing judgment
- Empower with choice
- Highlight strengths and resilience



Freedom Clinic Process

- Length of appointments
- No patient is ever fired
- Consistent providers
- Full-time access to providers
- Shared decision-making (needs, goals, wishes, priorities)
- Team-based, paralleled physical, mental health, addiction, and case management services
- Staff training in grounding techniques for emotional de-escalation of a flight-or-fight response



Freedom Clinic Referrals

Individuals and organizations that work with or help exploited and at-risk individuals

- ✓ Federal agencies (FBI, Homeland security)
- ✓ State and local government agencies (AGO, MA State Police)
- ✓ Safe houses
- ✓ Youth and adult service providers
- ✓ Other “on-the-ground” organizations
- ✓ Medical providers

Thank you – Questions?

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