



Research suggest that U.S. citizen minors are vulnerable to labor trafficking, but their experiences are not being identified and they are not receiving the care that they need. Service providers can play an important role in assisting youth who are being trafficked and preventing it among those who are at risk.

During Framework's **Labor Trafficking of U.S. Minors** event on February 11, 2021, Laura Murphy (Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice at Sheffield Hallam University) provided insight into labor trafficking of U.S. minors, including populations most impacted, vulnerabilities, and trends among trafficker techniques and industries.

Read some of Laura's publications on labor trafficking of U.S. minors

- [Labor and Sex Trafficking Among Homeless Youth: A Ten-City Study Full Report](#)
- [Trafficking and Exploitative Labor Among Homeless Youth in New Orleans](#)
- [The Louisiana Human Trafficking Report](#)

FORCE, FRAUD, and COERCION

What can this look like for U.S. minors?

- Threats of violence or retribution to them or others
- Lack of mobility
- Debt bondage
- Recruitment fraud
- Lack of payment
- Threats to share damaging information
- Cult-like conditions
- Employee surveillance
- Physical/sexual abuse
- Long hours without reprieve
- Environments of fear
- Trauma-bonding
- Conditional friendships or relationships
- Inability to walk away

The top types of suspected labor trafficking as reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline in 2019 were:

- Domestic work
- Agriculture and animal husbandry
- Traveling sales crews

However, U.S. minors work in many different industries, and could experience labor trafficking in any job. This could include illicit activities, such as compelled drug dealing. It is important to recognize this as a form of trafficking, but also to be cognizant of the risks associated with over-policing and increased incarceration due to labor trafficking charges.

81% of all labor trafficking victims had been forced to work in the drug trade.

“Labor and Sex Trafficking Among Homeless Youth: A Ten-City Study,” 2017.

VULNERABILITIES AND AT-RISK POPULATIONS

In a study conducted with 640 homeless youth, those interviewed were most vulnerable to being trafficked if they were LGBTQIA+ and were in the process of coming out, or if they were in the foster care system and were aging out.

Other vulnerabilities may include:

- Poverty
- Mental illness
- Inadequate education
- Homelessness
- Inadequate support network
- Historical injustice
- Health disparities
- A need to belong

U.S. minors may be particularly at risk for labor trafficking if they are homeless or runaway, LGBTQIA+, disconnected, part of a racial minority, second-generation immigrants, native, or children of survivors of trafficking.

The one factor that makes any person most vulnerable to trafficking is the need for a job.

RESOURCES

- [Typology of Modern Slavery](#) – A report from Polaris that analyzes more than 32,000 cases of human trafficking as reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline between December 2007 and December 2016.
- [2019 U.S. National Human Trafficking Hotline Statistics](#) – Compilation from Polaris of data from 2019 on human trafficking across the United States, including infographics.
- [Adverse Childhood Experiences](#) – Information from the CDC regarding adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), including resources, data from studies, and fast facts.
- [Trafficking Victim Identification Tool](#) – A guide for using the TVIT screening tool from the Vera Institute to screen for human trafficking, including in minors aged 13 and up.

To learn more about Framework or to request training, technical assistance, or individualized support on labor trafficking, visit us at FrameworkTA.org

