DEVELOPING A COUNTER-TRAFFICKING STRATEGY

There are many areas to consider when developing comprehensive strategies to tackle human trafficking within various sectors and organizations. A few critical areas for a robust counter-trafficking system are training, awareness, and policies/procedures. Guidance to consider while developing and implementing these key areas is outlined below. While the following sets forth best practices, it's essential to understand that each organization varies in resources and size and may focus on developing one area as a starting point.

Training

As human trafficking is a fast-growing crime, frontline professionals, who are in the best possible position to identify human trafficking due to the nature of their employment, should regularly receive training on human trafficking trends and practices. Frontline professionals can include employees in forward-facing government entities such as the border police, law enforcement, and immigration enforcement. It can also include non-governmental professionals within the transportation, hospitality, education and healthcare sectors.

Frontline professional training sessions should include general human trafficking information, updated trafficking trends and behaviors, and content tailored to the audience's needs. While all levels within an organization should receive training, education for those working on the "frontline" who are most likely to encounter potential victims of trafficking should be prioritized. Training sessions should be held regularly to maintain awareness of the latest guidance. Even if new information isn't offered in each training, refresher courses are vital to strengthening an individual's understanding of the topic while providing reminders of critical points. It also provides a forum for further discussion by employees.

A21 provides specialized frontline training sessions, based on availability, to various sectors. These include law enforcement, aviation, healthcare, and hospitality. Trainings cover multiple topics and seek to provide a complete overview of human trafficking, from breaking down the core elements of the crime to industry-specific strategies to combat exploitation. Please contact info@a21.org for more information or to book a professional training session.

Awareness

IMPORTANCE OF AWARENESS

Awareness is always the first step in understanding and combatting human trafficking. A foundational understanding of the issue, including recognizing human trafficking, the different types of trafficking, vulnerability factors, and dispelling myths, is vital to activate the correct response. Awareness as a general practice gives broader visibility to the issue of human trafficking. By remedying misconceptions about human trafficking and correcting potential stereotypes about both victims and perpetrators, individuals become better equipped to recognize possible trafficking situations. While different methods, strategies, and tools are used to raise awareness, one of the most effective ways is through widely disseminated, targeted public awareness campaigns.

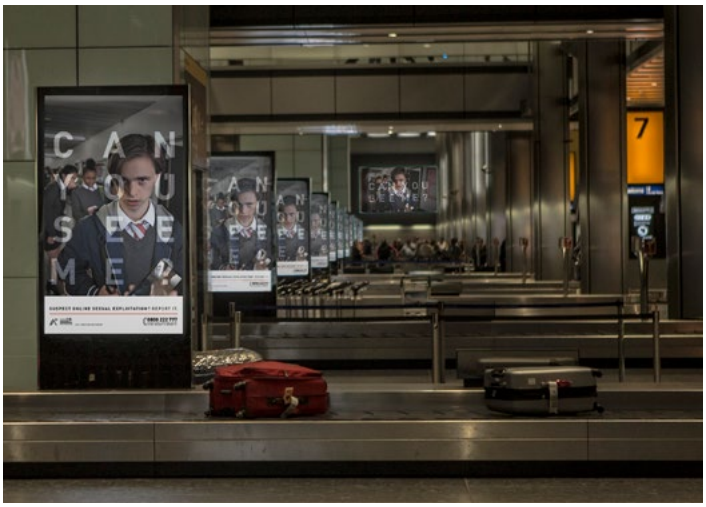
PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

Awareness campaigns increase the general public's knowledge of human trafficking. They also provide sector-specific perspectives (i.e., highlighting indicators of trafficking in an airport, hotel, or even a healthcare facility). Ideally, a public awareness campaign should be multi-faceted and appeal to vulnerable populations, actively trafficked victims, and the general public. Dynamic strategies will provide the general public with tools to recognize and report possible trafficking situations. Similarly, a victim-centered public awareness campaign allows victims to self-identify and seek assistance.

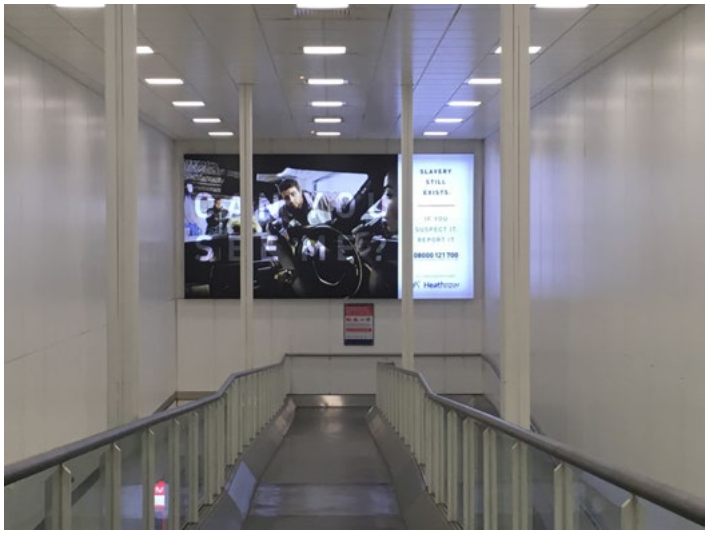
A foundational principle of public awareness campaigns is that an increase in reports leads to an increase in identified victims. Campaigns that encourage the public to make reports, paired with sector-specific frontline professional training, work simultaneously to combat human trafficking.

A21's *Can You See Me*? campaign illustrates the use of a public awareness campaign to highlight common human trafficking scenarios, present the key signs of trafficking and recruitment methods, and provide information on local reporting mechanisms.

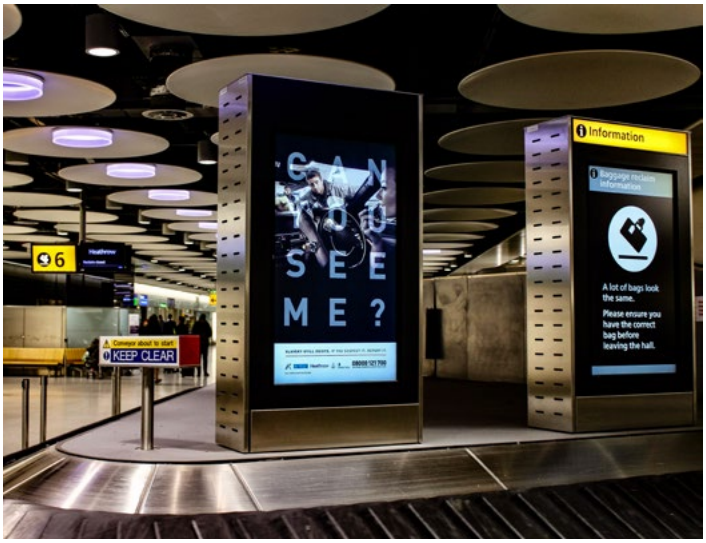
CAN YOU SEE ME?
SUSPECT LABOR TRAFFICKING?
REPORT IT
888-373-7888
LAMAR


7

CAN YOU SEE ME?
SUSPECT CHILD EXPLOITATION?
REPORT IT
800-THE-LOST
CLEAR CHANNEL



CAN YOU SEE ME?
08000 121 700
ECONOMY NEVER TASTED SO SWEET
FN64 MYB


CAN YOU SEE ME?
6
KEEP CLEAR
Information
A lot of bags look the same.
Please ensure you have the correct bag before leaving the hall.

Policies/Procedures

All sectors should have robust policies in place that outline clear guidelines if an individual encounters a potential victim of trafficking. These internal policies should address the necessary steps, appropriate staff conduct, and adhere to a victim-centered approach. Policies should also include an easy-to-follow referral process that is well understood by staff at all levels.

For example, such a policy can include:

- Creation of a step-by-step guide for when human trafficking is suspected.
- A clear flow chart of the relevant referral pathways.
- Listing of one central point of contact to receive reports of suspected trafficking.
- Anti-discrimination, reporting, and trauma-informed language policies.
- Dissemination of and/or training on these policies and procedures.

Such policies ensure that the application of a victim-centered approach results in a non-threatening process and limits re-traumatization, while providing safety for the victim. Depending on the size and structure of the organization, a group of individuals can be selected to receive more specialized training and be designated to assist in suspected trafficking situations.

EXAMPLES OF KEY VICTIM-CENTERED PRACTICES:

- Before speaking with a potential victim, separate the potential victim from the accompanying person.
- Enlist a trusted translator/interpreter who also understands the cultural context.
- Enlist an employee of the same gender as the potential victim when possible.
- Do not raise your trafficking concerns with the person accompanying the victim.
- Do not begin the conversation with anything to do with documentation, legal status, or violations of any laws, as this could potentially scare the victim - simply communicate you are there to help.

Depending on the organization's mandate (i.e., law enforcement), it may be possible to conduct regular, specialized victim identification "operations," or community outreaches, that focus specifically on proactively identifying potential human trafficking victims, conducting interviews/screenings, and providing any necessary further support.

NOTE: It is essential to assess whether or not the staff in your organization should interact with a potential victim of human trafficking. In some professional sectors, a best practice policy may require staff to report their observations and not approach a victim of human trafficking. In other organizations, there may be staff members who are trained to speak with a potential victim, and there may be others who are not. Your internal policies and procedures should clearly define which members, if any, are trained and equipped to intervene.

Post-identification Procedures

In addition to standard policies or procedures addressed above, your organization should establish a clear process that sets forth "next steps" once a victim has been identified. This process should include specific actions that ensure the proper protection and support of that victim. Post-identification policies should lay out specific steps, while providing key internal and external contacts for after a victim has been identified.

SUGGESTED COMPONENTS OF A POST-IDENTIFICATION POLICY

- A summary of relevant information about the suspected trafficking situation to support the investigative process.
- A list of relevant, local service providers, particularly those that provide 24/7 support for victims of human trafficking that can be contacted at any time.
- A directory of phone numbers and email addresses of key contacts, including internal and external entities.
- Code of conduct which provides guidance on engaging with a victim.
- Reporting mechanisms, both internally and externally (National Human Trafficking Hotline, local law enforcement).
- All procedures should include a provision requiring escalation of any victim safety concerns to a designated trained individual(s).
- Any communication should be kept confidential, and information should only be shared on a need-to-know basis.
- Research your local, non-emergency phone number for local law enforcement, particularly the department handling human trafficking reporting. If no such department exists locally, obtain the domestic violence and sexual assault department's contact information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

See Recognizing Human Trafficking for information on recognizing a possible trafficking situation.

More information about communicating or engaging with a potential victim of trafficking can be found in Victim-Centered Approach.

See Overview of the *Can You See Me?* Awareness Campaign to learn more about how to implement the campaign in order to spread awareness and support intervention efforts.

Potential contacts to include in a post-identification policy

REPORTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- If **emergency assistance** is needed, please call **911**.
- To report human trafficking please call the **National Human Trafficking Hotline** at **1 (888) 373-7888 or text HELP to 233 733.** Trained specialists are available 24/7 to handle reports and provide information about local resources for human trafficking victims and survivors.
- Suspected child sex trafficking can be reported to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) at **1-800-THE-LOST** or **cybertipline.org**.
- Incidences of human trafficking can be reported to local law enforcement.
- To report poor working conditions or labor exploitation, contact the **Department of Labor** at **1 (866) 487-2365.**
- A report must be made to your local Department of Child Protective Services and law enforcement if you suspect a potential victim is a minor. This will also connect a minor to appropriate resources.

SURVIVOR SERVICES

- Local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies can provide referrals and services through victim-assistance programs. Reach out to these service providers in advance to obtain the contact information of their department specialists who work with victims of human trafficking.
- Foreign nationals require an Eligibility Letter (minors) or Health and Human Services Certification Letter (adults) to access certain benefits and services. A report must be made through the **Office on Trafficking in Persons** to obtain these letters.
- Familiarize yourself with local non-governmental organizations that provide services for victims of human trafficking. A list of resources can be found online at the **National Human Trafficking Hotline Referral Directory** at **humantraffickinghotline.org/training-resources/referral-directory.**
- Access other **local community services**, such as food or housing, by dialing **211**.

CONTACT A21

- A21 seeks to equip frontline professionals with tools to identify, engage, and communicate with victims in a victim-centered manner. To book frontline professional training please contact info@a21.org.
- If you would like advice regarding a potential trafficking case, assistance on an upcoming operation, or repatriation support for a potential victim of trafficking:
  - → Contact **(949) 202-4681**
  - → Email **info@a21.org**

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