

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN CONTRA COSTA: ISSUES AND IMPACTS 2016

PREPARED BY



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# Executive Summary

**Human trafficking is happening throughout the Bay Area.** The Contra Costa Human Trafficking Coalition envisions public and private systems working together to create a community free of exploitation. Together, the Coalition works to identify, support, and serve human trafficking survivors in Contra Costa County.

Data on human trafficking prevalence has been consistently collected from six prominent Contra Costa agencies over the last several years. These agencies are members of the Contra Costa Human Trafficking Coalition and key partners on a federal human trafficking grant managed through The Contra Costa Alliance to End Abuse (Employment and Human Services Department). These agencies include STAND! for Families Free of Violence, Community Violence Solutions, Calli House, Bay Area Legal Aid and Rainbow Community Center.

In 2016, the grant partners listed above identified and served 110 human trafficking survivors (35 of whom were exploited children) in Contra Costa County. This includes:

- 99 survivors of sex trafficking
- 4 survivors of labor trafficking
- 7 survivors involved in both sex and labor trafficking

Many of these survivors were identified to Coalition partners through law enforcement, although others found services through friends and word-of-mouth referrals, underscoring the importance of outreach to both the community service providers and government agencies. Together, Coalition service provider partners were able to provide:

- Shelter to at least 58 survivors
- Over 20 different types of services, including case management and medical care
- Over 800 service units<sup>1</sup>, as many survivors accessed multiple kinds of support

In addition to these efforts, in early 2018 the Coalition will launch a new human trafficking awareness campaign with a focus on labor trafficking. In the spring of 2018, the Coalition will pilot a “Train the Trainer” program - with the focus on increasing the capacity of highly qualified trainers and trainings available in Contra Costa on human trafficking. The Coalition also looks forward to launching a new website, social media presence, and human trafficking database in the coming year. Additionally, the Coalition continues to support the work of the human trafficking high risk multi-disciplinary case review team (MDT), Red Sand Project<sup>2</sup>, and increase public postings about human trafficking (SB1193).

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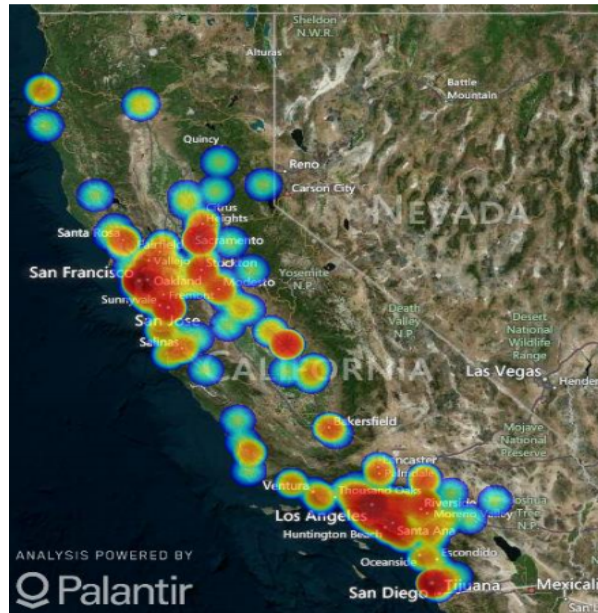
<sup>1</sup> 1 service unit is defined as 15 min of time spent with a survivor in a specific area. Additional services include; gaining access to personal items, court accompaniment, crisis intervention, emotional and moral support, education services, employment services, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Learn more about this project at [RedSandProject.org](http://RedSandProject.org)

# Addressing Human Trafficking in Contra Costa County

Trafficking humans for the purpose of forced labor or sexual exploitation is an international human rights issue. California has one of the largest concentrations of human trafficking survivors in the United States<sup>i</sup>. The Bay Area in particular has been identified by the FBI as one of the top hubs in the U.S. for human trafficking particularly for the sexual exploitation of children<sup>ii</sup>.

Map of Potential Human Trafficking in California<sup>2</sup>



In 2016, 7,621 human trafficking cases were reported nationally to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center; of those reports, the majority were reported in California<sup>iii</sup>. Contra Costa County is not immune to human trafficking. While under-reported, over the last three years the Contra Costa Human Trafficking Coalition, through its partners, identified and served over 400 victims of human trafficking.

The Contra Costa Human Trafficking Coalition has served the region for over a decade and envisions public and private systems working together to create a community free of exploitation. The Coalition is made up of over 30 partner agencies including a wide range of service providers, community based organizations, law enforcement, the District Attorney's Office and other local and national governmental departments.

## Coalition strategies include:

1. Raising awareness of human trafficking
2. Expanding survivor services and providing survivors with access to those services
3. Building capacity and improving coordination among partners
4. Improving the criminal justice system's response to trafficking
5. Engaging in policy advocacy
6. Providing a forum for information sharing

7. Hosting a multi-disciplinary team dedicated to human trafficking
8. Providing training and technical assistance to our partners

**As a Coalition, partners commit to:**

- A victim-centered, trauma informed, and culturally responsive approach to human trafficking
- Collaboration based on respect for each member’s expertise and role and willingness to commit to understanding each member agency’s cultures and mandates
- Active participation and follow through on goals as determined by the Coalition
- Educate survivors about their rights and to provide them with meaningful access to justice, services, and advocacy
- Share, disseminate, and implement best practices related to human trafficking

**As a Coalition, partners believe:**

- In the importance of identifying, reporting, investigating, and prosecuting trafficking crimes
- That human trafficking offenders should be held accountable
- That the root causes of human trafficking must be addressed
- That all victims of trafficking have the right to live free of exploitation

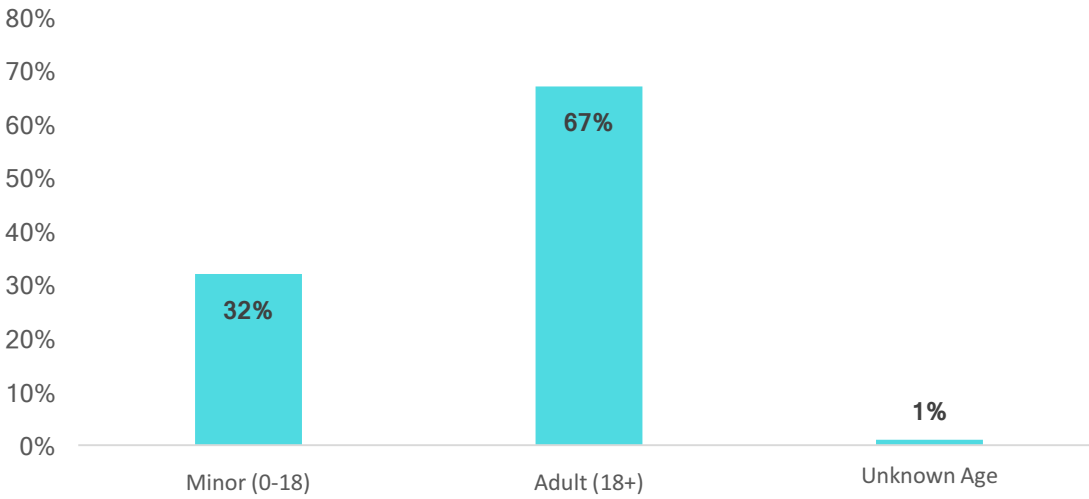
Coalition activities include SB1193 Days of Action, implementing the Red Sand Project and No Traffick Ahead hotel trainings, convening the human trafficking high risk case review team (a multidisciplinary team) and other campaigns and events to increase human trafficking awareness throughout the County.

## Survivors Identified in 2016

The Contra Costa Alliance to End Abuse (conveners of the Human Trafficking Coalition) was awarded grant money through the federal Office of Victims of Crime (OVC) to help identify and support human trafficking survivors. The Alliance administers these funds through some of the Coalition partners. Together, grant partners identified and served 110 survivors in 2016.

### Survivors by Age, 2016

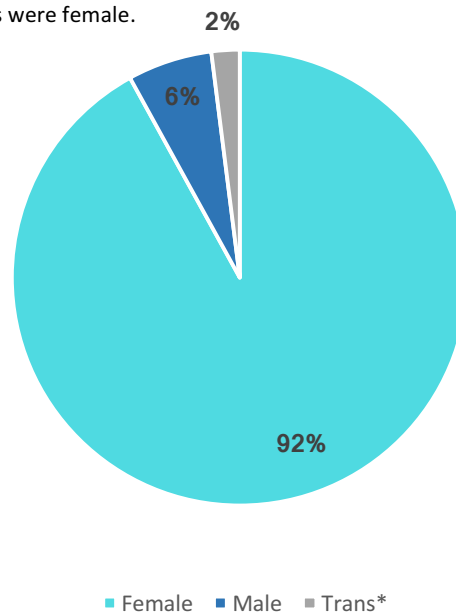
Nearly one-third of the survivors were minors.



Approximately one-third of the survivors served by grant partners in 2016 were minors. This is consistent with national statistics for the age of trafficking victims<sup>iv</sup>. The vast majority of survivors were female. Globally, women are at greater risk of being trafficked and many traffickers target only females, whether for sex or labor exploitation<sup>v</sup>.

### Gender Identity of Survivors, 2016

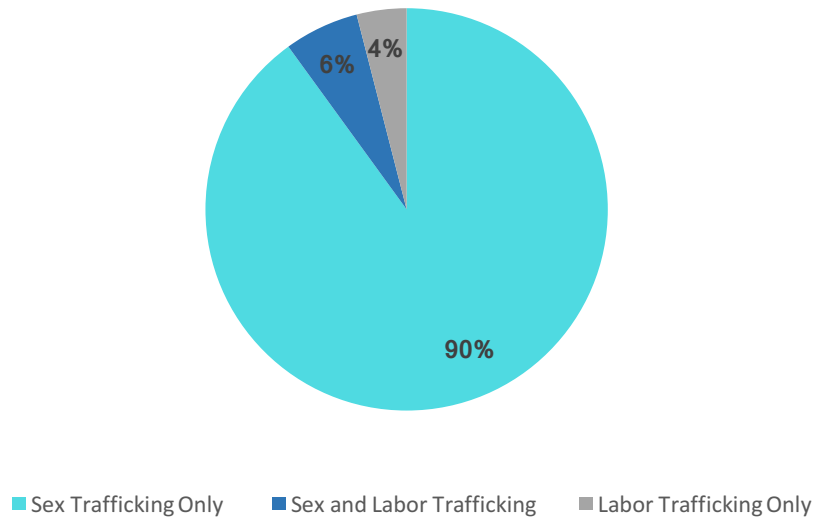
Most of the identified survivors were female.



Human trafficking can take many forms, but is generally categorized as either *sex trafficking* or *labor trafficking*. Sex trafficking is defined as the use of force, fraud, or coercion to perform a commercial sex act<sup>vi</sup>. Labor trafficking is a form of severe exploitation where individuals are threatened or otherwise compelled into debt bondage or other forced labor for little or no pay<sup>vii</sup>. Both sex and labor trafficking happen in Contra Costa County and are not mutually exclusive—a survivor can be subjected to both sex and labor exploitation. In 2016, only 10% of the survivors identified by grant and Coalition grant partners were involved in labor trafficking. However, labor trafficking can be more difficult to identify than sex trafficking<sup>viii</sup>, so this is not necessarily reflective of the true incidence of labor trafficking in Contra Costa County.

### Types of Trafficking in Contra Costa County, 2016

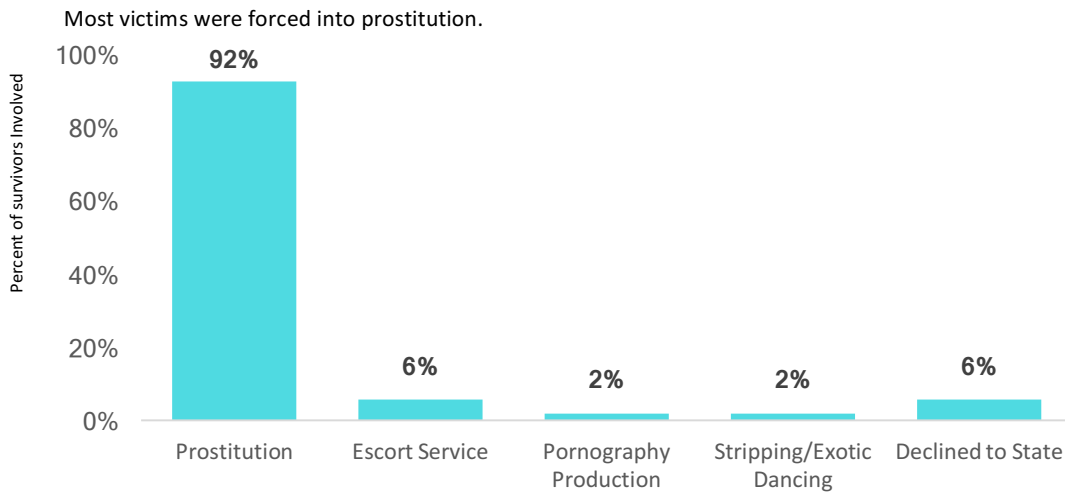
The majority of survivors identified were sex trafficked.



# Sex Trafficking in Contra Costa County

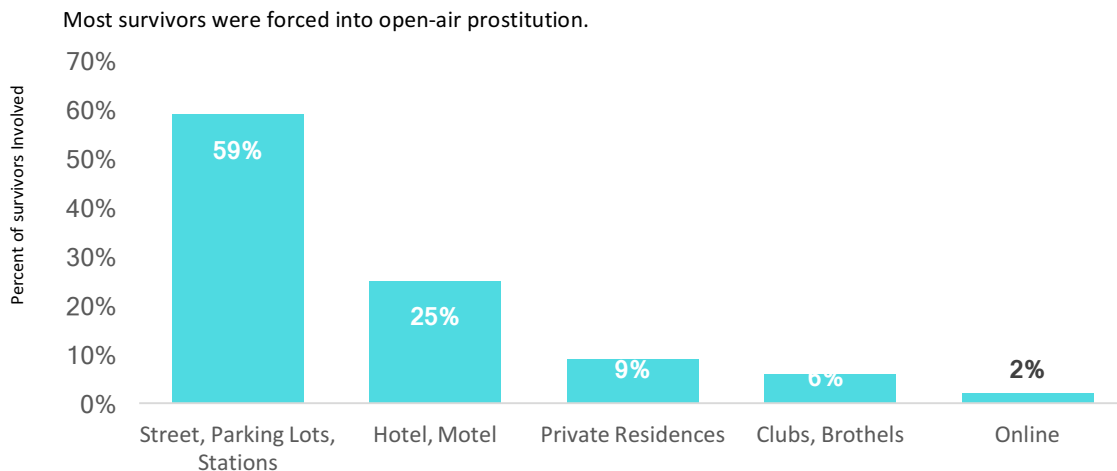
The Contra Costa Human Trafficking Coalition, through grant partners, served 106 survivors of sex trafficking in 2016. Of those victims, 100 were female, four were male, and two were transgender. Thirty-four victims (32% of sex trafficking survivors) were minors when they were identified. 98% of sex trafficking survivors identified in 2016 were from the United States.

## Primary Type of Exploitation (Sex Trafficking)



The most common form of sex exploitation in Contra Costa County is prostitution<sup>3</sup>. Among minor survivors, prostitution was also the most commonly identified form of exploitation. Most survivors were forced into open air prostitution, including on the street, in parking lots, or at truck stops. Over a quarter of survivors were exploited in hotels or motels. Exploitation in private residences, clubs, brothels, or online settings was less common.

## Setting of Trafficking, 2016

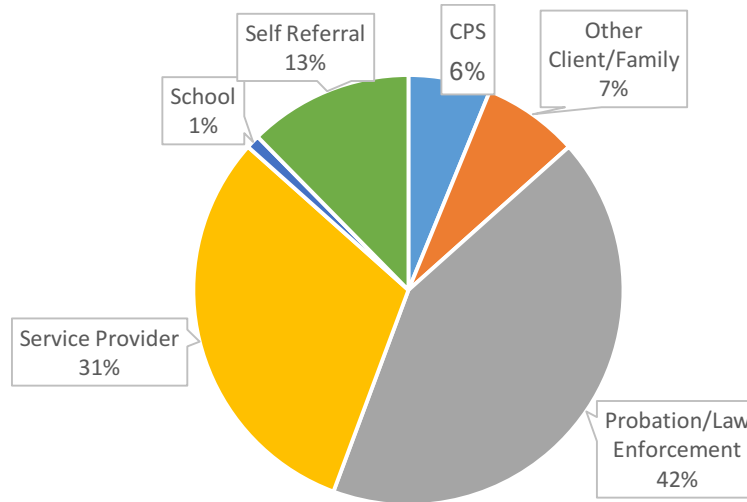


<sup>3</sup> There are victims of human trafficking who are engaged in prostitution by manipulation through force, fraud or coercion (or have not yet attained 18 years of age).



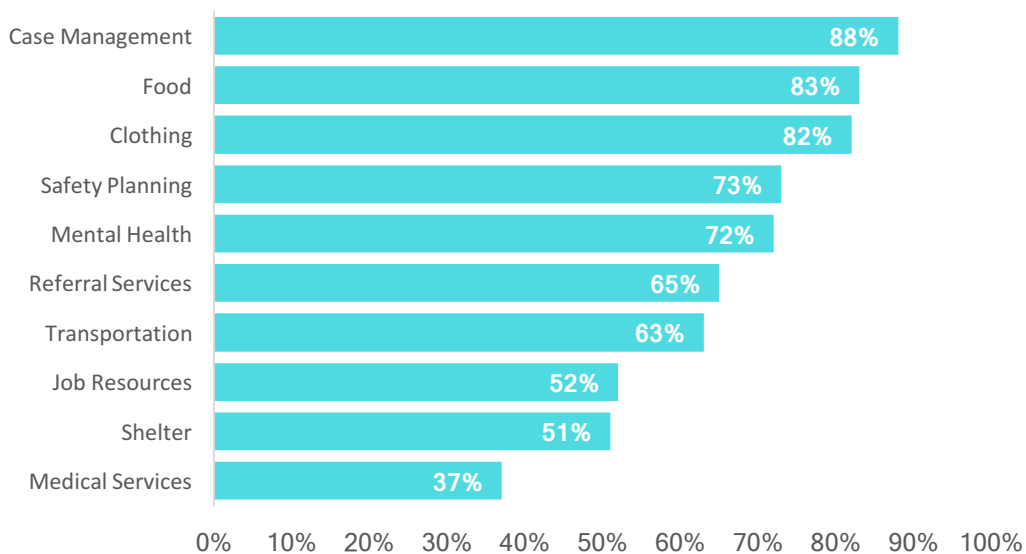
## How Survivors were Identified by Grant Partners

Law enforcement identifies most sex trafficking survivors.



Nearly half of survivors came to grant partners through law enforcement and about one-third through service providers such as non-profits, health services, and community partners. Interestingly, many survivors self-identified to grant partners, highlighting the importance of building trust through outreach. All survivors identified by grant partners receive services. In 2016, grant partners were able to offer over 750 services to 106 sex trafficking survivors. The top ten services received are listed below.

## Percent of Survivors Receiving Select Services



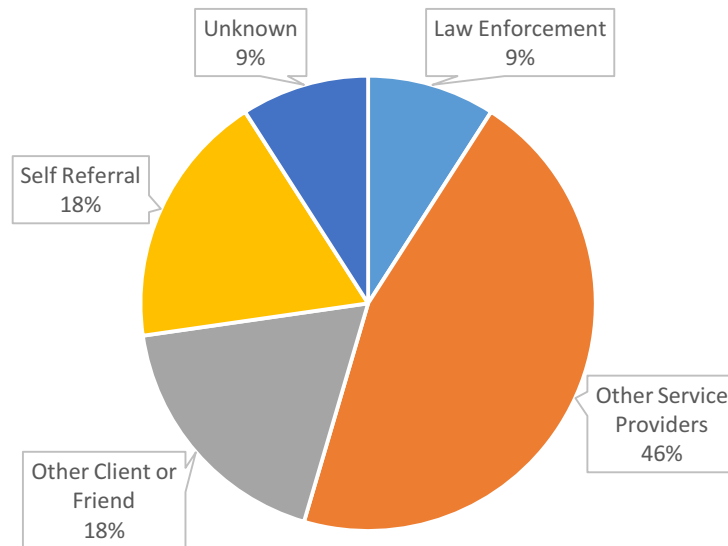
## Labor Trafficking in Contra Costa County

In 2016, grant partners identified 11 survivors of labor trafficking, most of whom were also involved in sex trafficking. This is likely a severe underestimate of the true amount of labor trafficking taking place in Contra Costa, as labor trafficking is harder to identify than sex trafficking<sup>ix</sup>. The lack of understanding of the true scope of labor trafficking in the U.S. is a concern, particularly in light of many industries' reliance on migrant labor (e.g., agriculture)<sup>x</sup>. Of the labor trafficking survivors identified, about a quarter were minors (27%) and all were U.S. citizens, although statewide there are many migrants trafficked for labor<sup>xi</sup>. Three of the survivors were male, two were transgender, and the rest were female.

Survivors were exploited primarily for manual labor, occurring in both field and office settings. Only one labor trafficking survivor was identified by law enforcement, the primary referral source for sex trafficking survivors. This is likely because labor trafficking can be more difficult to identify than sex trafficking.

### How Survivors were Identified by Grant Partners

Service providers identify most labor trafficking survivors.



Coalition partners provided over 80 services to labor trafficking victims in 2016. Services provided to labor trafficking survivors were similar to those provided to survivors of sex trafficking, with referrals (100%), clothing (91%), and case management (82%) as the top three services.

## Emerging Policy Areas

The Contra Costa Human Trafficking Coalition has made many significant advancements in the last decade. Together, Coalition partners have improved the identification of victims, adapted trauma-informed intake and screening tools for survivors, and strengthened treatment options. In the last few years, as a Coalition, we have particularly focused on improving services for commercially sexually exploited children. However, there are emerging policy areas where policymakers and providers can focus attention. For example:

### Increasing Housing and Resource Access

Increased investments in removing barriers to access services and housing for victims of human trafficking, including the preservation of emergency and long-term housing, as well as innovative housing solutions. Additionally important is supporting efforts that will increase language access and cultural responsive services for survivors of human trafficking.

### Collaborating Across Sectors and Departments

An effort to increase cross-agency and cross-system collaboration on human trafficking cases is important, as resources tend to be siloed. The Task Force model allows for cross-reporting and data sharing (including confidential or protected information) in multidisciplinary team settings in order to increase support for survivors.

### Utilizing Technology

Best practice includes supporting efforts that utilize technology to better serve survivors, including resource sharing apps, housing availability apps, and using social media to promote awareness and communicate with survivors when it is safe for them to do so.

### Building Expertise

Efforts that seek to specialize and build expertise for designated staff and systems to better support survivors of human trafficking are key, such as developing a commercially sexually exploited youth court, creating human trafficking units within agencies, and supporting specialized foster families trained in commercial sexual exploitation.

### Increasing Training around Labor Trafficking

Highlighting and bringing in efforts that increase the level of training, awareness, and funding to address promising practices related to labor trafficking is needed. This includes special attention to the hospitality industry, restaurants, salons, and other industries known to have large numbers of trafficked workers.

### Prevention

Best practice aligns with supporting efforts to increase prevention activities including initiatives that promote training, capacity building and deeper understanding for students, educators and social service staff around trauma informed care, adverse childhood experiences, healthy workplaces and schools.

## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> Center for Public Policy Studies: <http://www.htcourts.org/wp-content/uploads/CA-HT-Fact-Sheet-2.27.13.pdf?Factsheet=HT-CA>

<sup>ii</sup> U.S. Department of Justice: <https://oig.justice.gov/reports/FBI/a0908/final.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/state/california>

<sup>iv</sup> Polaris Project: <https://polarisproject.org>

<sup>v</sup> United Nations *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2016\\_Global\\_Report\\_on\\_Trafficking\\_in\\_Persons.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2016_Global_Report_on_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf)

<sup>vi</sup> Definition from Shared Hope International

<sup>vii</sup> Definition from the National Human Trafficking Hotline

<sup>viii</sup> U.S. Department of State: <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2008/105377.htm>

<sup>ix</sup> U.S. Department of State: <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2008/105377.htm>

<sup>x</sup> National Institute of Justice: <https://www.nij.gov/journals/271/pages/anti-human-trafficking-us.aspx>

<sup>xi</sup> Stanford School of Health: [http://schoolhealtheval.stanford.edu/files/IrisJovel\\_Humbio122final.pdf](http://schoolhealtheval.stanford.edu/files/IrisJovel_Humbio122final.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Map from the Polaris Project:

[https://humantraffickinghotline.org/sites/default/files/NHTRC%202015%20California%20State%20Report%20-%20CA%20-%2001.01.15%20-%2012.31.15\\_OTIP\\_Edited\\_06-08-16.pdf](https://humantraffickinghotline.org/sites/default/files/NHTRC%202015%20California%20State%20Report%20-%20CA%20-%2001.01.15%20-%2012.31.15_OTIP_Edited_06-08-16.pdf)