

Journalism & Sex Trafficking Lesson Plan

SUBJECT AREA(S)	TIME	AUDIENCE
Journalism / Yearbook / Broadcast Journalism	50 – 60 minutes	Middle + High School Students

OBJECTIVES

- Practice skills in critical thinking and critical analysis to think about how journalism can raise awareness about social injustices.
- Utilize school news sources to educate students about the issue of human trafficking.
- Utilize school news sources to mobilize students to take action in fighting human trafficking.

PURPOSE

- To continue exploring the social injustice of sex trafficking.
- To explore how the media has created awareness about the issue of human trafficking.
- To demonstrate the power of journalism to tell a story, raise awareness, and inspire social action.
- To inspire students to be active participants in community change.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Anchor Standards for Writing

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

ACTIVITY: Reporting on Human Trafficking

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION TO SEX TRAFFICKING

As an introduction, ask the students to define domestic sex trafficking. Include the activities of each role: sex trafficker (pimp), sex buyer (john), and sex trafficking victim. Write their answers on the board under the three roles.

1. Explain the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (2000) to the class.

TVPA: “The TVPA of 2000 is the cornerstone of Federal human trafficking legislation, and established several methods of prosecuting traffickers, preventing human trafficking, and protecting victims and survivors of trafficking. The act establishes human trafficking and related offenses as federal crimes, and attaches severe penalties to them. It also mandates restitution be paid to victims of human trafficking. It further works to prevent trafficking by establishing the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, which is required to publish a Trafficking In Persons (TIP) report each year. The TIP report describes and ranks the efforts of countries to combat human trafficking. The act also established the Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking, which assists in the implementation of the TVPA. The TVPA protects victims and survivors of human trafficking by establishing the T visa, which allows victims of human trafficking, and their families to become temporary U.S. residents and eligible to become permanent residents after three years.” (Source: <https://polarisproject.org/current-federal-laws>)

TVPA Definition of Sex Trafficking: a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, OR in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age.

- **NO ONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18** can sell their body, they are automatically a sex trafficking victim.
- Adults must prove that they were forced to exchange sex for something of value (money, drugs, place to stay, transportation, food, protection, etc.) through means of **FORCE, FRAUD, or COERCION**.
- **FORCE:** can include kidnapping, drugging, physical assault, assault with a weapon, sexual assault.
- **FRAUD:** can include tricking the victim into believe that the trafficker loves her/him; telling the victim s/he is going to be a model or a star, offering to provide basic needs without explaining the true intention or what is required in return.
- **COERCION:** (a) threats of serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; (b) any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; or (c) the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process (Source: TVPA).

2. Discuss the roles of the sex trafficker (pimp), sex buyer (john), and sex trafficking victim.

Ask students if they are able to discuss what each role entails. Write their answers on the board under the three roles.

Suggested language:

Sex trafficker or pimp: This is the person that recruits victims, through love, force, or event by providing for their basic needs, like food or a place to stay. The sex trafficker or pimp links the sex trafficking victim to sex buyers. This person controls the behavior of the victim and collects the money made from exchanging sex by the victim. Sex traffickers can be extremely violent and will resist the victim's attempt to leave by any means. A sex trafficker can be any gender and can be a mother, friend, boyfriend, or anyone.

Sex buyers: These are most often men who shop for prostituted persons on the street, in strip clubs, in massage parlors, through escort services, and online.

Sex trafficking victims: Victims can be male, female, transgender and of any race and sexual orientation, and of any age – including under the age of 18. They are often lured or romanced into sex trafficking by an older person through promises of money, success/fame, a future together, or through threats of exposure (to parents/friends/school/church).

3. Review the warning signs of a sex trafficking situation.

- S/he's dating an older guy (he might give you the creeps)
- S/he's super secretive about him
- He buys her/him lots of expensive presents
- He made her/him get a weird tattoo
- S/he has lots of unexplained cash
- S/he shops for clothes and stuff you know s/he cannot afford
- S/he has a second cell phone
- You find hotel room keys in her purse
- S/he has cuts and bruises
- S/he has a fake ID
- S/he has been really depressed, nervous, tense or afraid
- S/he misses a lot of school or dropped out of school
- Grades have dropped out of the blue
- S/he runs away a lot and avoids her/his family and friends
- You never know when s/he's telling the truth
- S/he started drinking or doing drugs
- You feel like s/he is brainwashed

PART TWO: INTRODUCTION TO JOURNALISM FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

What is the importance of journalism for social justice?

“When the media puts a spotlight on human rights, people start talking about the issues and demanding change. A strong, independent media is a referee between governments and citizens. When human rights are protected, governments are more accountable and people's lives improve.”
(Source: <http://www.jhr.ca/en>)

Students engaging in journalism and other forms of communication and media arts are actively engaging their right to freedom of speech. This segment is designed to empower students to

recognize the importance of freedom of speech, and how it can be used to educate or bring awareness to their peers and community about social justice issues occurring right under their nose.

What are some forms that social justice journalism can take?

1. Investigative reporting on under-reported social justice topics
2. Reporting on the social justice efforts of others, thus providing models for like-minded activists to duplicate
3. Promoting community discussion by hosting, and then reporting on, forums about social justice topics
4. Stimulating activism via informed editorials and activities such as coordinating online petitions (for a successful online petition model, see www.change.org).

(Source: <http://cmreview.org/doing-social-justice-journalism/>)

How can social justice journalism be used in a school setting?

- Teachers can present the topic of social justice journalism (resource links on the cover page of this lesson plan) in class and discuss how journalism can be used to promote social justice and speak out against social injustice to mobilize communities to action.
- Present some of the forms in which social justice journalism can be used (listed).
- Ask students to define what “social justice” means to them, and provide them with examples of the way others have defined it. (<http://www.reachandteach.com/content/index.php?topic=socialjustice>).
- Engage students in determining creative ways to use journalism in school to educate their peers on the social injustice of human trafficking, and mobilize their peers to action. This could include utilizing the school newspaper, the morning news show, or creating a yearbook spread about the issue.

PART THREE: ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENT 1 – A News Column in the School Newspaper

The students will write a column for the school newspaper that introduces the issue of human trafficking. Students can choose to write:

- An informative article that may include the federal definition of sex trafficking, how young people have been recruited, and warning signs for trafficking
- An investigative report on local occurrences of trafficking in your state or even your city
- An article spotlighting local organizations or agencies that are combatting human trafficking in your city/state
- An article spotlighting what your school is doing to raise awareness about human trafficking (STARFISH School model, see below)

Students will conclude their article with a “call to action” about what could be done to begin to see change in your community regarding the social injustice of sex trafficking (e.g. awareness campaigns in the community, talking with legislators, identifying and partnering with local anti-trafficking agencies).

If your school plans to adopt the STARFISH School Model, then human trafficking may be a social issue that the school focuses on for the entire academic year. Student leadership, such as student government or National Honors Society will be putting on events throughout the year to raise awareness and educate their peers about this issue. In this case, the students' articles could be included in issues of the school newspaper throughout the year.

Also, in the STARFISH School model, there are monthly activities and events that the school can choose to participate in. The school newspaper is a great place to advertise for those events and report on the success of those events. Students can learn how to create an advertisement for the school newspaper. Students can be assigned to the various activities throughout the year as a reporter. They would need to take pictures, interview individuals at the event (teacher sponsor, students who put on the event, students who attended the event), and report on the outcome of the event (how many people attended? Was money or resources raised? How much? etc.)

ASSIGNMENT 2 – A Segment on the Morning News

Very similar to Assignment 1, students who participate in the school's morning news show will create a morning news segment about the issue of human trafficking. This is particularly advantageous if the school chooses to utilize the STARFISH School model and will have activities and events throughout the school year. Students participating in the school's morning news show can create a segment that:

- Introduces the issue of human trafficking, which may include the federal definition of sex trafficking, how young people have been recruited, and what human trafficking in the United States looks like
- Reports on local occurrences of trafficking in your state or even your city. Where did the incidence take place? What was the situation? How did it resolve?
- Interviews individuals from local organizations or agencies that are combatting human trafficking in your city/state to educate peers about what is being done in their area with regard to human trafficking and how students can be involved
- Spotlight what your school is doing to raise awareness about human trafficking (what events are taking place, provide an event schedule, interview the student group putting on the event, report about the outcome of the events, etc.).

Students will conclude their segment with a "call to action" about what could be done to begin to see change in your community regarding the social injustice of sex trafficking (e.g. awareness campaigns in the community, talking with legislators, identifying and partnering with local anti-trafficking agencies).

Students working on the morning news show, if separate from journalism students, can collaborate with journalism students to report in tandem with one another.

ASSIGNMENT 3 – A Yearbook Spread

The yearbook is a perfect place to highlight what has occurred over the past academic year. For schools who have adopted the STARFISH School model and have done events throughout the year to raise awareness about human trafficking, highlighting these events in the school yearbook is a great way to celebrate what the students accomplished, but also to continue to keep this issue in the forefront of students' minds.

Here is a great example of how high school journalism students utilized the yearbook to discuss important social justice issues:

<http://www.poynter.org/2014/in-st-louis-high-school-journalists-are-telling-their-own-stories-about-ferguson/282183/>

Have students research other ways other high school students have highlighted social justice issues for the school yearbook.

Students can design a yearbook spread to:

- Highlight the issue of human trafficking (what it is, who it affects, what can be done, etc.)
- Highlight student groups that brought education and awareness of this issue to the school
- Highlight the events that took place over the year on the issue of human trafficking
 - Photos of the events
 - Interviews of those who put on the events
 - Write about the impact of those events on the students, community at large
- Highlight the best articles that were featured in the school newspaper.
- Leave a final call to action for students to continue the fight against human trafficking in their community.

Resources:

Journalists for Human Rights <http://www.jhr.ca/en>

College Media Review <http://cmreview.org/doing-social-justice-journalism/>

Social Justice Journalism <http://www.socialjusticejournalism.org/>