

Myth Information Game

Instructions: Below are 7 common myths about the issue of sex trafficking, followed by the facts. Ask a student, “Myth or Fact?” and then read one of the common myths below. If the student answers correctly that the statement is a myth, he/she will win a prize (optional), such as a piece of candy. The person asking the questions will then read the fact aloud. If the student answers incorrectly, that the statement is fact, the person asking the questions will inform the student that the statement was actually a myth, and will then read the fact aloud.

1. MYTH: Girls who are trafficked are often promiscuous.

FACT: Any girl or boy can be trafficked regardless of their sexual activity or reputation.

2. MYTH: Sex Trafficking must involve some form of travel between states or borders.

FACT: The definition of trafficking does not require transportation, although it may be involved in the crime. Sex trafficking is more accurately described as “compelled service” where an individual will be overcome by force, fraud and coercion.

3. MYTH: That only happens in foreign countries.

FACT: The federal definition includes both U.S citizens and foreign nations, both are protected under the law. Each year approximately 5.5 million US school age children are trafficked.

4. MYTH: It only happens to girls not boys.

FACT: Anyone can be a victim regardless of race, class, gender, ability, or sexual orientation. Traffickers choose their victims based on vulnerability.

5. MYTH: If someone gives consent it is not trafficking.

TRUTH: Under federal law, a person under age 18 cannot legally consent, therefore all minors involved are considered victims of human trafficking. Even if they do give consent, one's initial consent to provide sex is no longer relevant once force, fraud or coercion is used

6. MYTH: There must be physical restraint or physical force when identifying a trafficking situation.

FACT: The legal definition of trafficking does not require physical restraint, bodily harm or physical force. Psychological means of control, such as threats, or abuse of the legal process are sufficient elements of the crime.

7. **MYTH:** Victims of trafficking will immediately ask for help or assistance and will identify as victims of crime.

FACT: They often do not immediately seek help or identify as a victim of crime due to lack of trust, self-blame, or training by their pimp/trafficker. This is why it is critical that law enforcement, social service providers and community members learn to recognize the signs.

- All people under the age of 18 (girls and boys) who are induced to commit commercial sex acts are victims of trafficking. For adult men and women, the commercial sex act is considered sex trafficking if it is compelled by force, fraud or coercion.