



## WELCA @ ELCA YOUTH GATHERING

### Human Trafficking Exhibit

Women <sup>of the</sup> **ELCA** 

Mujeres <sup>de la</sup> **IELA** 



## Advocacy in action | Our exhibit space

Youth participants assembled hygiene bags to give to seven organizations in and around Detroit that work with victims of trafficking and at-risk youth. The teens placed items in a bag and included hand-written notes of encouragement for the recipient. More than 1,500 bags were collected.

Women in active Women of the ELCA units across the ELCA raised more than \$10,000 to help support the items that were donated. Each bag contained a toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, soap, lip balm, shampoo, conditioner, tampons, lotion and a towel.

In addition, our space featured a 6-foot-wall installation. On one side, a suburban bedroom scene was depicted because victims of human trafficking come from all socioeconomic levels. The walls of the bedroom were decorated with pictures that contained information about human trafficking. The opposite side of the wall featured the "living quarters" of a homeless youth. It included statistics about homelessness among teens, specifically among LGBTQ youth. The homeless youth population is especially vulnerable to becoming victims of human trafficking.

# COMMON TRAPS

- promise of a good job in another country
- false marriage proposal
- sold by parents, husbands, boyfriends
- kidnapped

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services



# VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING

In 2014 more than 89% of reported cases involved women and girls under the age of 21.

National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline

PINK PINK

YES

KTV

A collection of personal items is scattered on a sandy surface. In the center is a black smartphone with a white charging cable plugged into its bottom. To the left is a silver smartphone. In the foreground, there is a purple hair straightener with a black cord. To the right, another purple hair straightener is partially visible. In the background, there are several perfume bottles, including one with a blue cap and another with a silver cap. A grey mesh bag is also visible in the upper right corner.

# SEX TRAFFICKERS LURE VICTIMS WITH

- Promises of a high-paying job
- Promises of love and romance
- Promises of fast money and a glamorous life

[www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org)

# NOT JUST POOR PEOPLE

Trafficking victims come from  
every socioeconomic level.

[www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org)





# TRUST TAKES TIME

People who are being trafficked may not seek help or even see themselves as victims. Don't make snap judgments about who is who isn't a trafficking victim. Take time to build trust over several conversations.

[www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org)

# Clues that someone is being trafficked

- under 18 and selling sex
- trading sex for money, food, housing, clothes
- frequently seen at hotels/motels
- tattoos signifying "ownership"
- pictured in online ads for sex

[www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org)

# SOCIAL MEDIA AND TRAFFICKING

Pimps use social media sites and apps to recruit victims.

Hope, 17, was abducted by someone she met online and forced into prostitution. "It all started because I posted that I hated my mother," she recalls. "A woman messaged me back telling me that I could go stay with her, and we'd go partying. She showed up within 45 minutes. I was gone."

Hope says the woman took her to a motel where a male accomplice was waiting. She was beaten, drugged and sold for sex—to up to 20 men a day. After three weeks, she was finally rescued. "I could never be Hope again after that," she says.

Pimps lurk to learn if you have a support system. Will someone notice if you go missing?

Huffington Post, WECT, Channel 6, Wilmington, N.C.

# TYPES OF YOUTH TRAFFICKING



Sex Trafficking

**84%**

Labor Trafficking

**9%**

Other

**7%**

National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline and Polaris's BeFree Textline for child trafficking in the United States. The data does not represent the full scope of human trafficking.

[www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org)



## Advocacy in action | Our exhibit space

This interactive display covered only a portion of the information available on the topic of human trafficking. For additional resources and research, visit:

[www.traffickingresourcecenter.org](http://www.traffickingresourcecenter.org)

for more information, report a tip or access resources:

Call: 1-888-373-7888 | Text: HELP to BeFree (233733)

[www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org)

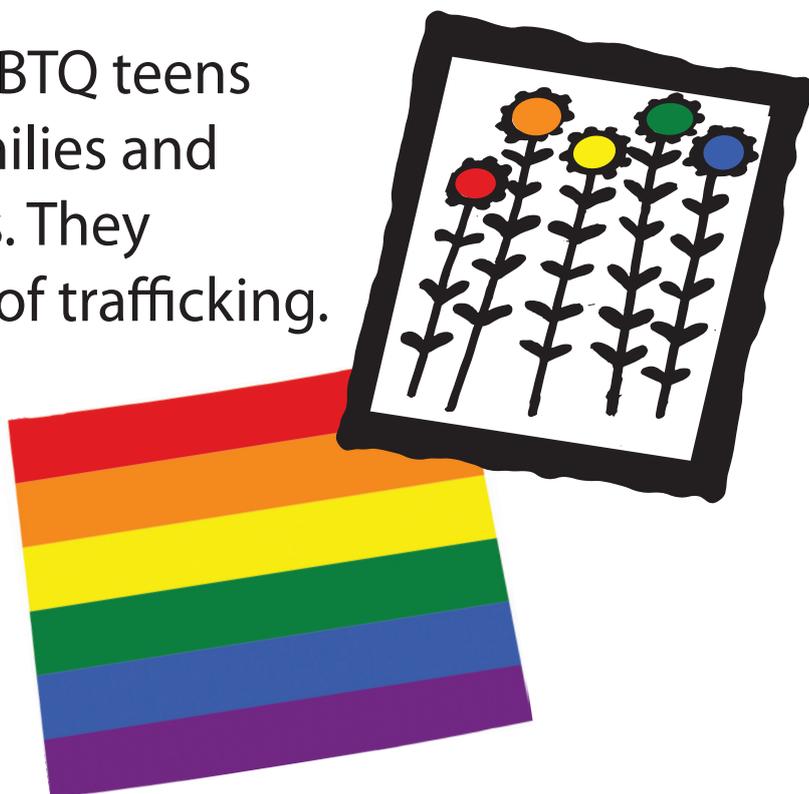
[endslaverynow.org](http://endslaverynow.org)

**1 in 4 homeless teens became a victim of sex trafficking or was forced to provide sex for food or shelter.**

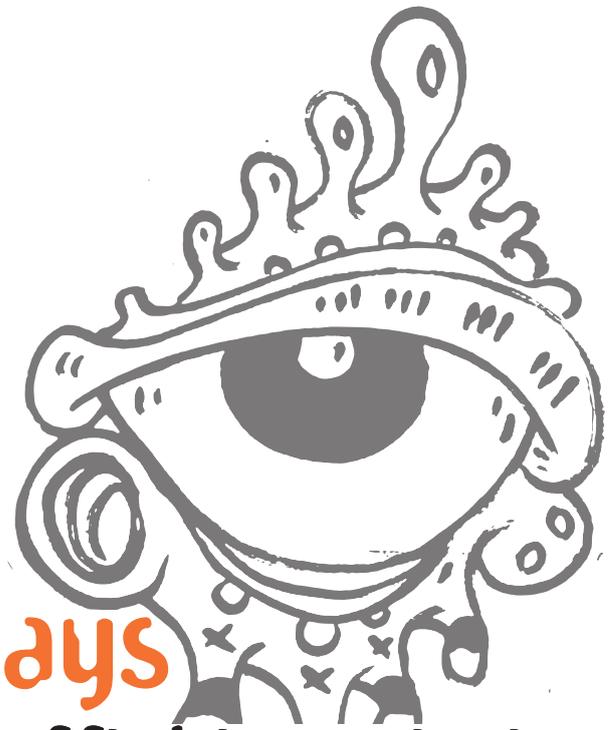
Covenant House in New York, 2013 study

People who identify as **LGBTQ** make up **40%** of the **runaway and homeless youth population**

An estimated 26% of LGBTQ teens are rejected by their families and forced from their homes. They often end up as victims of trafficking.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
<http://bit.ly/traffickteens>



**1 in 6 Runaways**

were likely sex trafficking victims.

Of these, **68%** were in the care of  
social services or foster parents

when they ran.

[www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org)



# Take action against human trafficking

## 1: Start a group to discuss trafficking.

Share what you have learned with your friends and in your congregation. Partner with the WELCA group in your church. Host a meeting to spark interest, then decide on specific goals for your group.

## 2: Lobby policymakers.

You have a powerful voice in your community and your state. Visit or write to your local politicians.

## 3: Do your research.

Stopping trafficking takes research and cultural understanding. Start here: [traffickingresourcecenter.org](http://traffickingresourcecenter.org).

## 4. Support local anti-trafficking organizations.

There are many organizations working to end trafficking and support victims and survivors. Do a search in your community (Google: Your community and "anti-trafficking organization") and learn how you can help. Do they need financial support, in-kind support or volunteers?

## 5. Avoid companies that profit from human trafficking.

Human trafficking often operates alongside legitimate businesses, according to the Polaris Project ([polarisproject.org](http://polarisproject.org)). You can find out which companies use slave labor from the Department of Labor: <http://bit.ly/slavelabor>

# #EndSlaveryNow

Millions of people are enslaved around the world today, most in plain sight. Through education, awareness and activism, we can end slavery and human trafficking in our lifetime.

**What can you do in 10 minutes to #EndSlaveryNow**

**Swap** out your daily coffee and tea for Fair Trade versions

**Watch** these documentaries: #StandWithMe, "Half the Sky" and "Very Young Girls"

**Look** up your slavery footprint. How many slaves work for you? [SlaveryFootprint.org](http://SlaveryFootprint.org)

**Sign up** for email updates at [EndSlaveryNow.org](http://EndSlaveryNow.org)

**Share** what you've learned here. #WeAreWelca