

The Investigation of Human Trafficking in North Carolina: An Analysis of Prevention Education

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01

OVERVIEW

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

“The subtle or overt, physical or psychological, coercion and exploitation of a person to provide labor or sexual demands”
(DOJ, 2023)



The most prevalent form of victimization in the world

As both a crime against the person and the country (DHS, 2021).



Second-largest global criminal industry

A reported annual profit of over \$150 billion and over 25 million victims (DHS, 2021).



Targets our most vulnerable populations

80% of trafficked victims in the Americans are female while over $\frac{1}{3}$ are minors (CTDC, 2022)

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina is ranked ninth in the United States for human trafficking. The prevalence of major highways/interstates, military populations, and agricultural land contribute to the high rates of trafficking (Polaris Project, 2022).

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Research suggests that **students in grades K-12 are among the highest-risk populations** targeted by traffickers as victims (Ellery, 2019).

Prevention education efforts effectively contribute to a **decrease in trafficking** numbers (Henderson, 2016).

Educational institutions should take advantage of the opportunity to **inform both students and the public**



SO WHAT EXACTLY IS PREVENTION EDUCATION?

A comprehensive model **addressing the root causes** of interpersonal violence, sexual assault, relationship violence, and stalking. Prevention strategies are intended to **target the individual, the community, and external societal factors** that influence, and are influenced by, human trafficking.

OUR RESEARCH



IDENTIFY CAUSES/RISK FACTORS

Using existing academic literature, identify the major causes and indicators of human trafficking in NC



QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

Through a series of qualitative interviews, gauge what is needed for an effective prevention education program in NC



RISK INDEX MAP

Develop a risk index map to estimate the true prevalence of trafficking in NC



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop policy recommendations for an effective state-mandated prevention education program in NC



02

TRAFFICKING OPERATIONS

TYPES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

1

Sex Trafficking

The **coercion or abduction of individuals**, predominantly women and children, into the realm of **commercial sex exploitation** (Keskin et al., 2020).

61% of identified cases of human trafficking in **Charlotte** were sex trafficking (CMHTTF, 2023).

Often involves the manipulation of victims through psychological coercion, physical violence, and debt servitude (Nichols and Heil, 2014).

2

Forced Labor

Encompasses a multitude of sectors wherein victims are **subject to coercion, physical abuse, and deplorable working conditions** (Zhang et al., 2019).

Often **work long and difficult hours** and receive little to **no financial compensation**.

Debt bondage is a common tactic of traffickers (Keskin et al., 2020).

BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF TRAFFICKERS

1

Traits

- Narcissism
- Rationalization of actions

2

Manipulation

- Psychological pressure
- Deceitful promises
- Threats

3

Recruitment

- Deceptive job offers
- Fraudulent marriages
- Abduction
- Blackmail
- Threats

4

Subjugation

- Abuse
- Isolation
- Financial control

IDENTIFICATION CHALLENGES

Due to the hidden nature of the crime, **law enforcement agencies struggle to identify cases** of human trafficking.

- **Transportation networks** facilitate trafficking
- Commercial drivers used to identify trafficking
- Research suggests collaboration and training is necessary between law enforcement agencies and the trucking industry



MILITARY & AGRICULTURE

Trafficking reaches beyond the shadows of society, infiltrating disparate sectors such as agriculture and the military.



Military

Victims often recruited through deceptive techniques

The **hierarchical nature of the military fosters environments of abuse and coercion**



Agriculture

Agricultural operations are a **large indicator of undocumented populations**

Victims are often **promised employment and improved prospects**



03



RISK FACTORS



THERE ARE SEVERAL RISK FACTORS/INDICATORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

WOMEN AND CHILDREN ARE AMONG OUR MOST VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

But there are also other indicators of high-risk populations...

Minorities

Undocumented immigrants

LGBTQ+ individuals

Individuals with limited education

Children in foster care

Violent crime/abuse

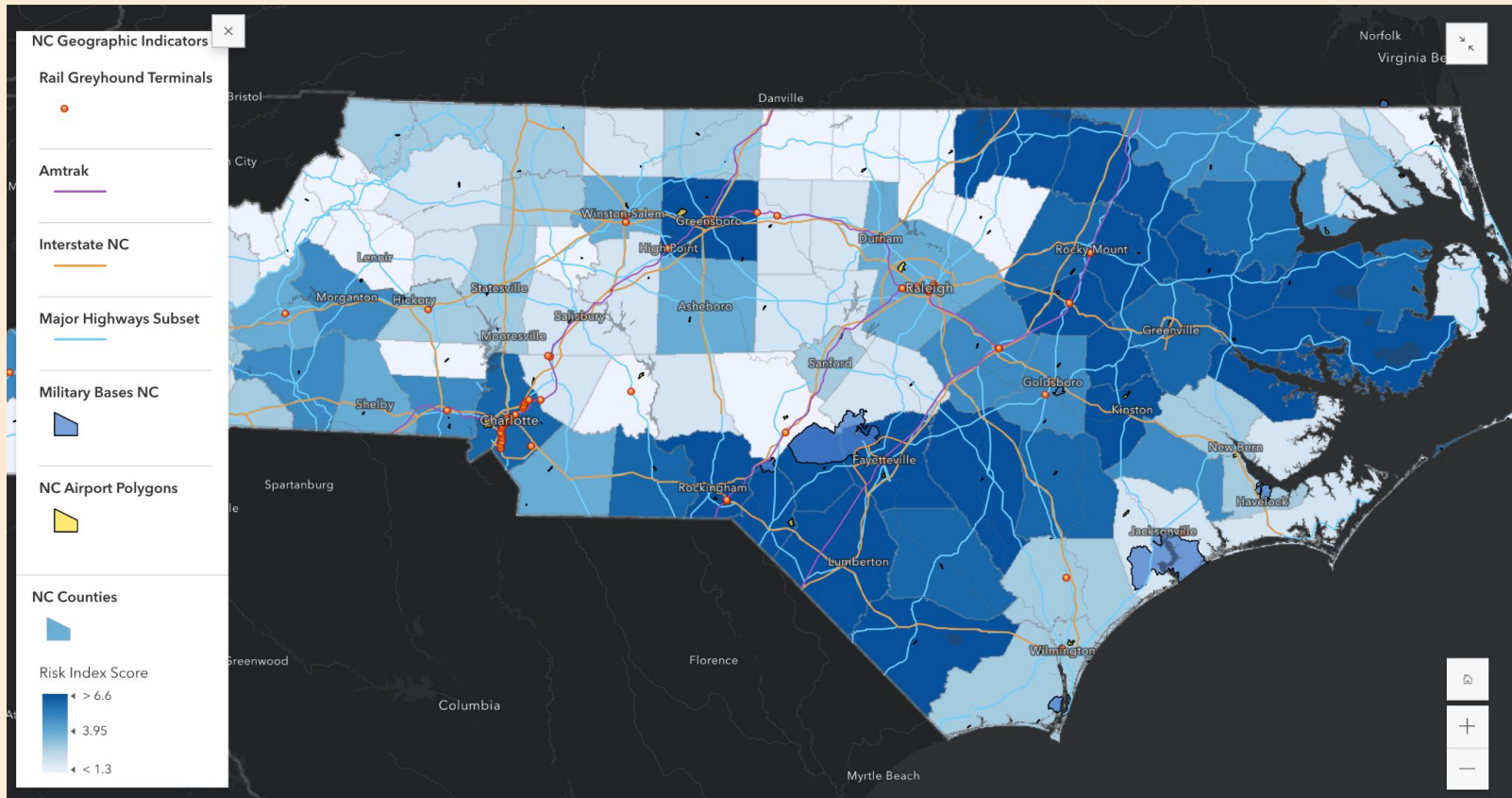
Rape

Poverty

Proximity to major highways

Proximity to agricultural land

Proximity to military bases



<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/7c52865791df42ff89c41c3674ca02bb>

NC Risk Index Map

04 EFFECTS

PHYSICAL EFFECTS



Commonly identified physical effects of trafficking include:

- Headaches
- Stomach pain
- Back pain
- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
 - HIV
- Dizziness
- Weight loss
- Memory loss
- Work-related injuries

Commonly identified physical effects on adolescent victims include:

- Inadequate diet
- Insufficient hygiene
- Beatings/abuse
- Neglect
- Unwanted pregnancies
- Unsafe abortions
- Pregnancy complications
- STIs
 - HIV/AIDS

MENTAL EFFECTS



Commonly reported mental health problems among trafficked individuals include:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- PTSD
- Somatization
- Global severity distress
- Other severe psychiatric disorders

(Oram et al., 2016) (Altun et al., 2017)

Commonly reported mental health problems among trafficked adolescent victims include:

- Affective or mood disorders
- Depression
- Hopelessness
- Anxiety
- Guilt
- Shame
- Increased need for mental health services

(Ottisova et al., 2018)

ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Impacts on the Economy

- \$150 billion business (Abudu, 2018)
 - Labor trafficking profits about \$3.8 billion (Suchland, 2015)
 - Sex trafficking profits over \$27.8 billion (Suchland, 2015)
- Nearly \$19.6 billion lost earnings have resulted (Suchland, 2015)
- Specific impacts on the economy are limited in knowledge (Suchland, 2015)

Individual Impacts

Trafficked victims have difficulty:

- Securing a consistent income (Novotney, 2023)
 - Lack of education
 - Lack of work history
 - Criminal records
- Finding safe housing (Gardner, 2023)
- Obtaining healthcare (Gardner, 2023)
- Purchasing food (Gardner, 2023)
- Paying bills (Gardner, 2023)



FEDERAL AND STATE STATUTES

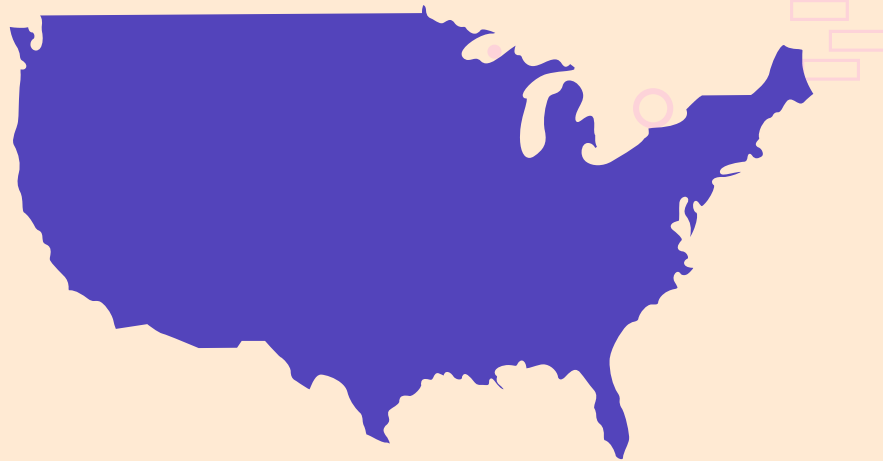


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FEDERAL STATUTES

Human Trafficking

- The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000
- The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2017
- The Abolish Human Trafficking Act of 2017
- The Frederick Douglas Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2018



Prevention Education

There are no federally mandated violence prevention education requirements in the U.S.

NC STATUTES

Human Trafficking

- The Safe Harbor/Victims of Human Trafficking
- GS 115C-81(e)(4A)
- SL 2019-245
- SL 2019-158
- Senate Bill 626: Modifying Human Trafficking and Rioting Laws

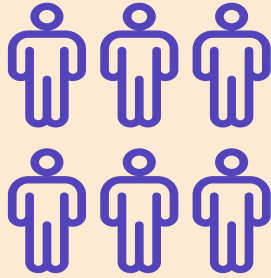


Prevention Education

North Carolina passed Senate Bill 199 in 2019, which requires public and charter schools in the state to adopt training programs for child sexual abuse and human trafficking.

06 PREVENTION EDUCATION

QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY



Interview conducted with 6 key stakeholders on human trafficking in North Carolina and related prevention education efforts

A combination of qualitative data gathered from stakeholder interviews and existing academic literature was used to identify effective policy recommendations for a state-mandated prevention education program in North Carolina.

MAJOR FINDINGS



Using the information gained from our stakeholder interviews, we gathered the following key findings:

Four pillars of prevention education

Four challenges of prevention education

FOUR PILLARS OF PREVENTION EDUCATION

Four key components that should be included in an effective state-mandated prevention education program in North Carolina.



Trauma Informed



Evidence-Based Practices



Inclusivity



Public Health Model

01 TRAUMA INFORMED

- **70%** of adults who report trauma experience it **before 16 yrs old** (Champine, 2021)
- Academic impacts
- In practice:
 - Acknowledge history and consequences
 - Emphasis on **strength, healing, and resistance**



02 EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

- “The conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the **care of individuals**” (Hannes 2019)
- **“Context”** as primary layer (Hannes 2019)
- Teacher selection, lesson implementation, and **student wellbeing** (Klassen, 2021).

03 INCLUSIVITY



- Diversity of student populations
- Cultural recognition and **vulnerabilities** (Martino 2018)
- **Equitable access** and modifications (Ferguson 2018)



04 PUBLIC HEALTH MODEL

MUST...

- Align strategies with **public health initiatives**
- Stress the importance of:
 - Raising awareness
 - Providing information
 - Promoting proactive measures to **mitigate risks**
- Adapt to changing population dynamics, economic development, and lifestyle trends through **community-based strategies**

FOUR CHALLENGES OF PREVENTION EDUCATION

Four major obstacles to implementing a state-mandated prevention education program that should be considered by policy makers



Political Climate



Parents/Guardians



Reflectiveness

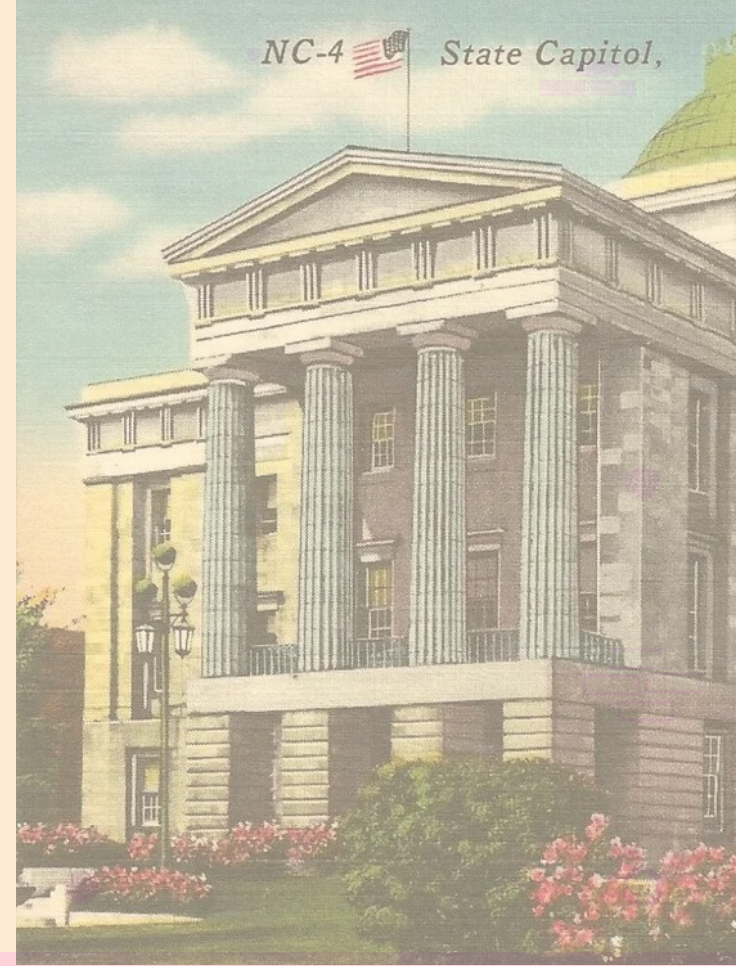


Funding

01 POLITICAL CLIMATE



- Polarized political environment
- **Underdeveloped** political awareness and correlates
 - Deters politicians and policy makers



02 PARENTS/GUARDIANS



- Senate Bill 49 Ratification (**“Parent’s Bill of Rights”**)
- FERPA & HIPAA Regulations
 - Gives parents the authority to approve prevention education
 - **Removes** instruction in K-4 grade
- State responsibility to **maintain nonviolent** and **healthy** society



03 REFLECTIVENESS

- Authentic reflection of a geographic regions demographics
- Educators must have an understanding of the intricacies of diverse populations including cultural differences and gives them the tools to respond to these

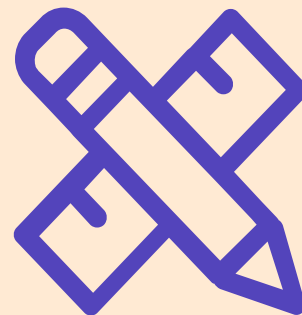
04 FUNDING

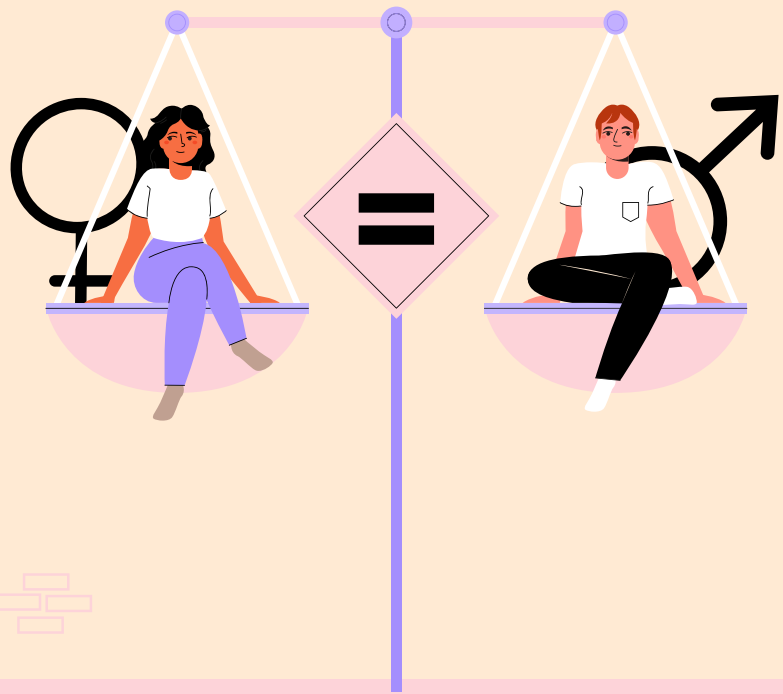
1. NGOs and Government **misalignment**
2. Human trafficking **lacks priority status**
(Blanton, 2020)
3. **Competition** for finite resources
4. Continuous **unequal & minimal resources**
to educational institutions (*Think Again: Is
Education Funding in America Still Unequal?*, n.d.)



“

Prevention education has emerged as a critical tool in the fight against human trafficking by raising awareness, educating communities, and empowering individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to recognize, prevent, and report instances of trafficking. While not yet federally or state-mandated, prevention education serves as a feasible and effective solution to defeating human trafficking.





THANK YOU!

ANY QUESTIONS?

HELPFUL RESOURCES

1. [National Human Trafficking Hotline](#)
2. [NC Stop Human Trafficking](#)
3. [Human Trafficking Commission Resource List | North Carolina Judicial Branch](#)
4. [Human Trafficking | NC DOA](#)
5. [Human Trafficking | NC Coalition Against Sexual Assault](#)
6. [Project No Rest](#)
7. [The Polaris Project](#)
8. [Human Trafficking Resources | UNC Hospital's Beacon Program](#)

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