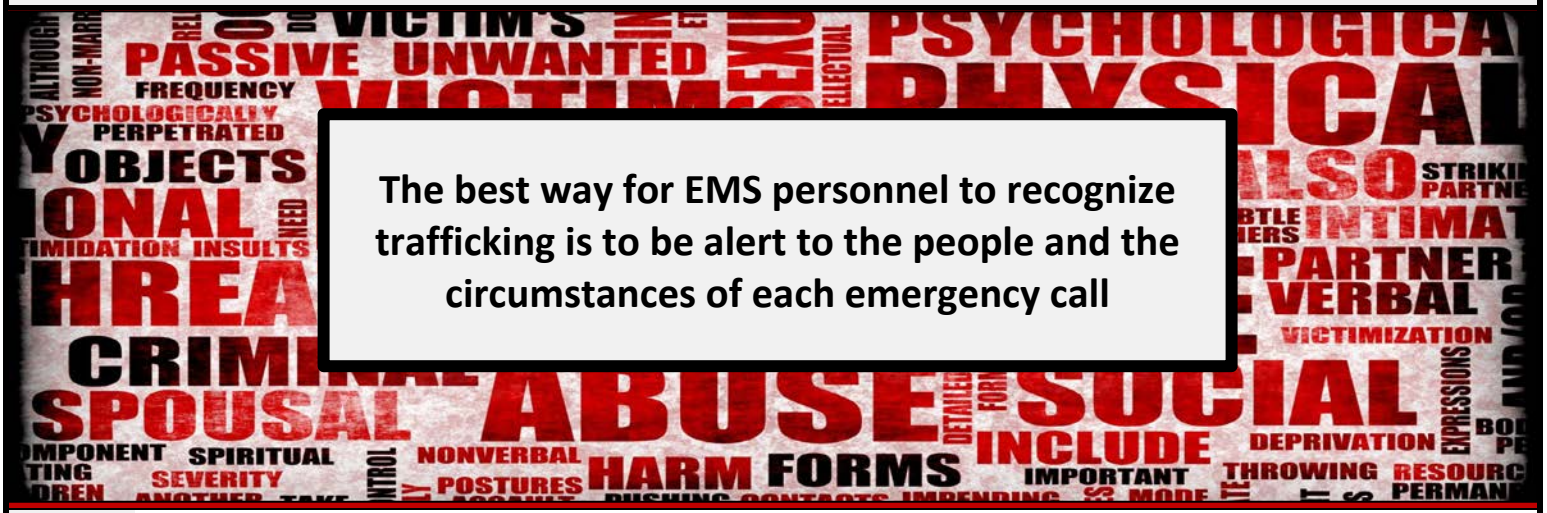
Human Trafficking

Awareness

Human trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of labor, service or a commercial sex at by means of force or coercion. Children under age 18 induced to perform a commercial sex act are automatically considered trafficking victims, whether they seem to give consent or not. Coercion is implied.



Red Flags

- Tattoos of names, phrases, or monetary symbols (💰 👑 |||| $$)
- Brands or intentional scarring in deliberate patterns
- Anxiousness when talking to EMS personnel, inconsistencies in explanations
- Very limited knowledge of the area in which they live
- Not carrying personal identification
- Owns expensive or high-end goods, or is groomed (i.e. hair, nails) beyond their means
- Living with a large number of people who are not family
- Always accompanied by a third party (especially non-English speaker)
- Mentions of significant debt
- Paranoid behavior (i.e. will not allow someone to walk behind them)
- Carrying many condoms on their person

Due to their trauma, victims may seem unresponsive to questions, show anger, or display an unusual loyalty to their traffickers. Ask gentle, nonjudgmental questions and listen carefully to understand their responses in the context of possible trafficking.

	QUESTIONS TO ASK	HOW TO CONTEXTUALIZE ANSWERS
Living Situation	Can you tell me about where you live? Where do you eat and sleep? When did you get the tattoo? What does it mean?	Look around the scene. Victims of trafficking are often forced to live where they work (restaurants, motels, etc.) and have their movement restricted. Minors are often not allowed to play with others. Traffickers may lie to the victim about where they are or move them so often that they are unable to orient themselves to their surroundings or build relationships.
Family & Friends	Who do you live with? Does your family live with you? How often do you get to see family or friends?	Traffickers often isolate victims and keep them away from family and friends. Traffickers can also *be* relatives or family friends. Listen: do they seem able to control their own life, make decisions on their own?
State of Mind	Has anyone threatened you or made you feel unsafe? Did someone tell you what to say today?	Traffickers often physically or mentally harm victims, then threaten their family if they are not compliant. Parents may instruct the victim to listen to the trafficker to work and send money home. Victims from outside the US worry about deportation.
School and/or Work	Where do you go to school? What is it like? Do you work? Where are you working now? Who keeps track of the money you earn?	Victims are usually told they are working off a 'debt' and are not allowed to attend school, resulting in a history of truancy. Victims may mention work without pay. Do not use words like 'call girl', 'pimp', 'escort', 'trafficking'. Refrain from judgmental terms: remember, these are victims of a serious crime.

Law enforcement officers and investigators can conduct thorough investigations later in a trauma-informed manner.
Document well. Remember for pediatric patients EMS is mandatory reporter. Inform LE or hospital staff.

TOOLS

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