

Childhood and Adolescence Free and Safe

Addressing Human Trafficking as a Community



Contribución
del Gobierno de
Estados Unidos



About Human Trafficking



The brochure you are holding now has been written for you and everyone in your family and community.

It seeks to help you better understand the seriousness of the problem of Human Trafficking in our region, the causes or factors that lead to children and teenagers becoming victims of this crime, and to offer some ideas on how to think better about what we can do to protect them.

Take your time to read it, and share it.

It will certainly help you think about how we can build friendlier communities for our children and teenagers to grow up free, but above all, safe and not becoming victims of Human Trafficking.

What is happening with our children?

Nowadays it is common to hear or see news about negative things happening in our society: robberies, assaults, rapes, feminicides, etc.

But it is even worse when bad things are affecting our children. Especially when abuse violates their rights and deeply damages their lives. The figures are alarming:

- 6 out of 10 women have suffered some form of violence by their partners.
- More than 1.5 million people in Peru are alcoholic.



- 8 out of 10 children in Peru have been abused by their parents.
- Every day 4 teenagers under 15 become pregnant.
- Every day 4 cases of Human Trafficking are reported, 2 of them involve minors.
- 60% of young Peruvians who drop out of school are working.

With this in mind, Human Trafficking is one of the most serious problems in our region.

- Every day 4 cases of Human Trafficking are reported, 2 of them involve minors.
- 7 out of 10 victims of trafficking are captured by false job offers.

- Out of 10 trafficking victims, 5 are victims of Sex Trafficking, 4 of Labor Trafficking and 1 of Domestic Servitude.

As you may know, Human Trafficking, also known as modern day slavery, includes Sex Trafficking, Labor Exploitation, Forced Labor and Domestic Servitude, among other things.

Sex Trafficking is when a person is part of a commercial sexual act, and is forced to do this under threat, fraud, coercion or any combination of these.

Labor Exploitation is when the work of one person is used for the benefit of another without respecting the labor rights of the victim.

Forced Labor is any work or service extracted from any person under the



menace of punishment and for which they have not offered themselves voluntarily, whether paid or not.

Finally, we talk about Domestic Servitude when a person provides personal services in a private home, without considering his or her legal labor rights.

That is why we say there are different types of Trafficking.

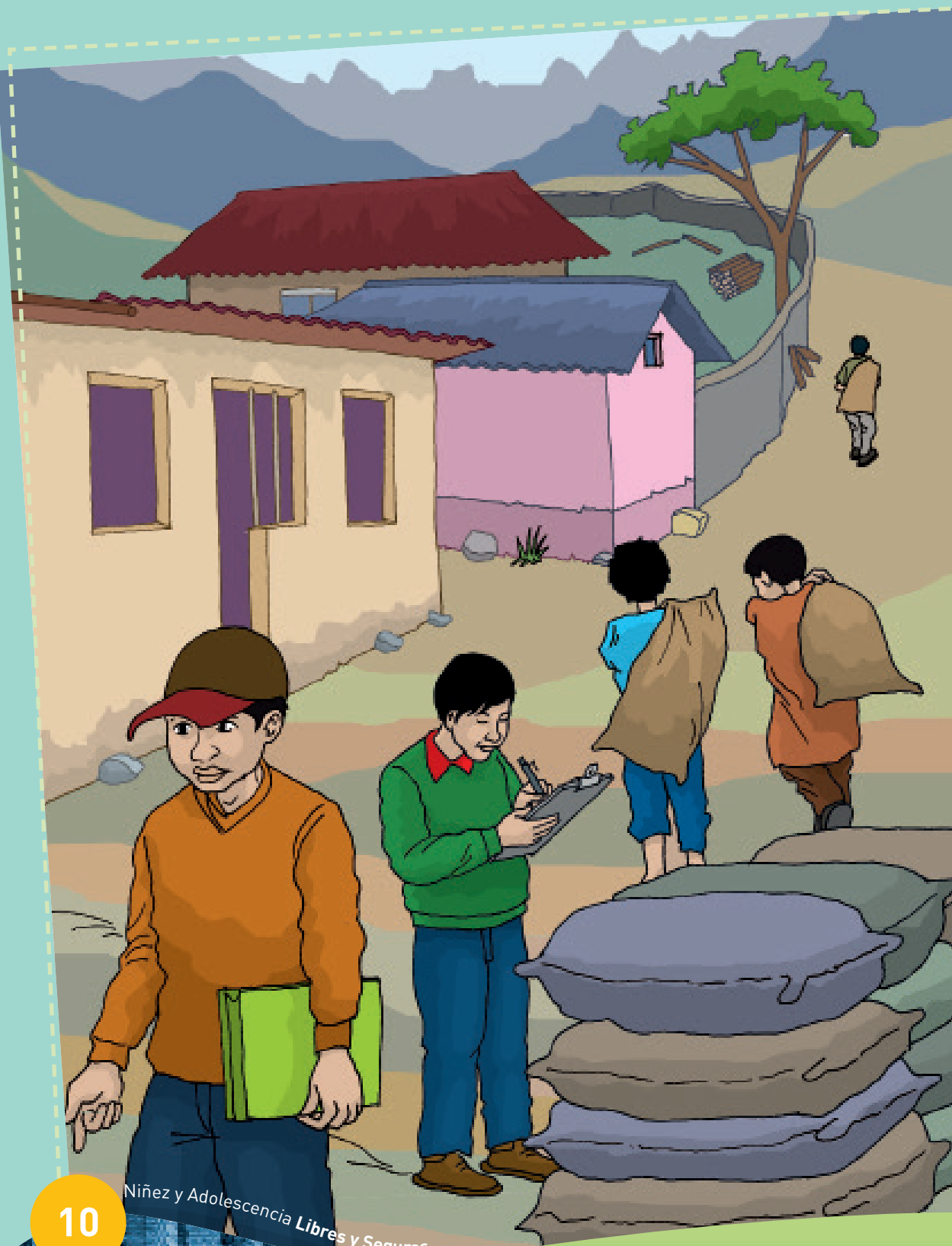
¿Why is this happening?

The figures mentioned earlier, and the seriousness of Human Trafficking, show us that something very serious is happening in our society in general and in particular in our communities.

And although there is no real explanation as to why this is happening, we can say there are some causes or factors that allow or encourage situations like this. Let's see which are the most important:

- **Poverty and Lack of Jobs.-**

This factor undoubtedly affects the lives of children, teenagers and families, because it results in a low level of educational and



difficulties in getting a decent and well paid job, which creates a vicious circle of a lack of resources, family income and the existence of servitude. At the same time it feeds into the idea that you have to leave or “escape” the community to find “something better.”

- **The Existence of Illegal Businesses.-**

This situation is not only expressed in the informality of some economic activities, but especially in the growing presence of unlawful activities, such as corruption of authorities, selling drugs to young people, illegal mining, among others.

This shows little or no presence of the State, as well as the absence of legal instruments to detect the above activities and to make it look as if they are allowed, or even worse, that they are considered

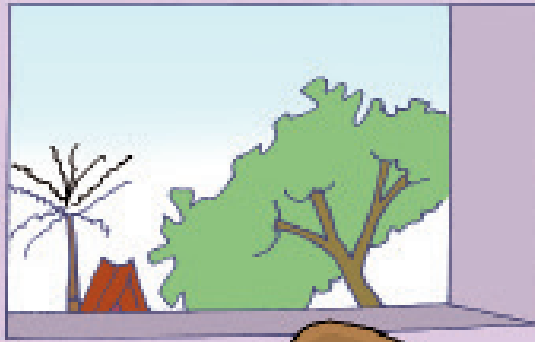
to be normal by the community in everyday life.

- **Emotional Fragility.-**

Another influence in the way many children and teenagers grow up today, is emotional fragility. Authoritarian parenting creates vertical relationships with poor displays of affection or the mistaken belief that children should obedient, rather than thoughtful and critical. This makes children grow up with a great need for affection, with a low self-esteem and being used to relationships based on fear and submission to authority.

- **Macho Culture.-**

The macho mentality has, at its most extreme, has led to the murder of



thousands of women by their partners and is therefore a clear cause of the critical situation in which children live. That is why it is logical that if our children grow up with prejudices that consider men superior to women, it will result in many discriminatory practices and abuses, having unequal power relations, poor expectations about the future of women as to what they can achieve, the objectification of a woman's body as something that can be rented or owned, etc.

- **Social Indifference.-**

The indifference of people toward these problems reveals that we are not facing a problem of “sick” individuals or people. What we suffer from today is part of a mentality that has “normalized” abuse, violence and labor exploitation. In other words, that all those things are considered common and acceptable, which is why we see sometimes neighbors not intervening in situations of visible injustice, because they feel that “it is not their problem.” Often the reason for this indifference is because people’s rights are ignored.



¿How can we prevent these situations?



It is very common that the drastic things mentioned earlier, create discouragement among parents, who feel helpless and powerless to face them.

Blaming the authorities has also become customary, as if they were the only ones who could do something.

Nothing is further from the truth though. From within the communities we can do a lot to deal with this situation. And most importantly, we can do it with a preventative mindset. That is, doing things to prevent these unfortunate situations from happening.

That is why it is very important to understand the root causes of these phenomena. Only by taking these factors seriously can we concentrate our efforts on reversing the situation and working toward our children and teenagers to grow up free and safe.

So let's see how we can prevent the factors we have analyzed above from affecting the future of our children:

Addressing Poverty and Lack of Jobs

As we have mentioned before, one of the factors that weakens the future of our children is Poverty and Lack of Jobs. However, not all families or communities



living in poverty have these problems with their children.

We should therefore ask ourselves: How can we prevent poverty from affecting the children of our community in a decisive way?

Faced with that question there may be many ideas. Below we will offer you three suggestions of things the community can do to address these realities.

Maybe we could:

- Identify and register families living in extreme poverty. This will enable the community organization and its board to monitor more closely to find a way in helping them, especially their (teenage) children.

- Take supportive and solidarity actions. There are many ways to collaborate with “social cases”. This will help us give them concrete support in their specific needs, but also to prevent them from feeling alone and making decisions that may affect their children.
- Run income or social programs. If the community board is willing to do so, it can include needier families into social programs that can help them with any specific dimension of their problem.



Address Illegal Economies

Another factor that weakens the future of our children are the Illegal Economies within the communities. However, that should not condemn the children of our community, so we must do something.

We should therefore ask ourselves: How can we prevent illegal economies from affecting the children of our community in a decisive way?

Maybe we could:

- Identify the people who place job advertisements. It is important for the community to watch out for suspicious advertisements, especially those on the radio. These can be used to attract

children and turn them into victims of exploitation or Human Trafficking.

- Identify hazardous work for children and teenagers. Likewise, it would be very convenient for the community to identify what types of work pose specific risks for children. That way these types of activities can be better monitored.
- Spread information on the risks of hazardous work. However, it would be pointless to do so without telling the families what work is dangerous or risky, so they can take the necessary precautions.

Address Emotional Fragility.



Another factor that weakens the future of our children is that they have been raised with a certain emotional fragility. However, that depends on our own actions as families and can be changed.

We should therefore ask ourselves: How can we make our children grow up emotionally strong?

Maybe we could:

- Agree that violence against women is a community issue.

We can no longer continue to allow it to be considered normal or a private matter, in which we should not intervene. When rights are violated or people are mistreated, we have to accept that we are giving a bad example to our children.

- Create a registry of families with violence. That way, we will have information that allows us to focus on those families and play a vigilant role and exert social pressure on their members to avoid violence and to provide support for women and children.
- Promote child and teenage participation actions. One of the biggest challenges is to change the idea that children should only do what they are told. It is vital to encourage them to participate with their opinion and direct action in various community activities.

Addressing the Macho Culture

Another factor that weakens the future of our children is that they are being raised in



a macho culture. However, that depends on our own actions as families and can be changed.

We should therefore ask ourselves: How can we make our children overcome the still predominant “macho” culture while growing up?

Maybe we could:

- Value women in management positions. In our community we do not have the tradition to recognize the value of women. It is important that our children see a change in that. This can be achieved by putting women in charge of vital matters, instead of giving them insignificant management positions.
- Events that help us learn about the subject. In many cases, we make mistakes that weaken the role of

women due to poor understanding. In other words, it would be extremely valuable if we could organize dialogues or workshops on the subject in order to move forward in overcoming the present macho culture.

- Seek support and advice from expert institutions. It is good to recognize when a certain degree of specialist support is needed. While it is a complex and contentious issue, the input of a specialized institution would be very useful in rethinking the value of women.



Address Social Indifference.

Finally, we have spoken earlier about one of the factors that can undermine the future of our children, which is that they grow up amid the Social Indifference to their development processes. However, that depends on our own actions as families and can be changed.

We should therefore ask ourselves: How can we make our children grow up safe in a society that is not responsive to their needs?

Maybe we could:

- Report the presence of suspicious individuals. People are usually known within the communities, so it is relatively easy to detect the presence of strangers who have arrived without a clear explanation of what they are doing there.

- Register residents and travels of minors. It would be of great value if the directive had a resident registration system for them to know who lives where, as well as to register when a child arrives or leaves the community.
- Warning of travelling minors by transporters. Transport companies or transporters need to know that they can only transport minors who are accompanied by their parents. If the parents are not there, they must report these travels to the community authorities.

On the other hand, and knowing the value of what we can do from within our communities, it is also important to learn what is the role of the Government, and the actions public offices should take. Only then can we better address the



situations we witness and demand that they fulfill their obligations. Let's look at the roles the various public entities have in this respect:

- **Role of the Police**

Receive and record all complaints, and prevent, investigate and combat crime.

- **Role of the Prosecutor**

Receive and investigate complaints and proceedings, and bring the accusation before the Court.

- **Role of the Judiciary**

Administer justice by passing sentences through its different levels.

- **Role of the Court of Peace.**

Administer justice by passing sentences in case of minor offenses.

- **Role of Municipal Defenders of Children and Teenagers (DENUMAs)**

Protect and promote the rights of children and teenagers and to refer cases.

- **Role of Health Centers**

Provide primary health care and refer cases of violence to the police.

- **Role of Emergency Centers for Women (CEMs)**

Provide psychological, legal and social support for people affected by violence.

- **Role of the Office of the Public Defender**

Handling complaints about poor assistance of any Government agency in defending rights.

- **Role of Municipalities**

Develop social policies and programs to improve the lives of people.



What to do if I am aware of Human Trafficking?...

It is clear that our efforts will be aimed at preventing abuse or Human Trafficking.

However, apart from our preventive work, we may find ourselves in situations where this is already happening.

If this is the case, it would be good to follow these steps:

1.- Initial Contact

Provide reassurance and information without questioning the victim.

2.- Detection

Confirm the suspicion with first-hand information.

3.- Approach

Prioritize the physical and emotional security of the victim.

4.- Referral

Refer the case and take health, family and laws into consideration.

**And remember,
only this way can we
build communities
for children and
teenagers to grow up
free and safe.**

**REPORT SITUATIONS
OR CASES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING:**



Call 1818
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