

# Human Trafficking effects the LGBT community

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Human Trafficking effects the LGBT community  
Photo by David Paul Morris/Getty Images

Discrimination is not about people exercising religious freedoms so they can practice their religion in comfort, it has real detrimental effects on individuals and society. The LGBT community is significantly affected by poverty, HIV/AIDS, and [human trafficking](#) or [prostitution](#) because of the harmful effects of discrimination.

As many young people are kicked out of their homes by parents before finishing college or even high school, denied activities and resources that give them equal opportunities in sports the arts or academics, and denied employment protections. Even in 2016, there are a significant number of young people flying to California or New York to leave the discrimination in their home state; or even seek international asylum. Recently, the nephew of the Gambian President, Alagie Jammeh, received asylum in Oxnard, California ([Washington, Blade](#)).

20.9 million people globally are enslaved by human trafficking and 6.27 are victims of sex trafficking ([Polaris.org](#)). Trafficking effects youth and adult populations. Human trafficking is defined as labor or commercial sex under force, fraud, or coercion. Individuals in communities that are subject to discrimination and marginalization are most vulnerable to these practices.

Polaris, a national anti-human trafficking research and resource group has published a report with information about Human Trafficking and a guide to creating an effective community and organizational response.

A 2013 report by Covenant House in New York, reported that 23% of LGBT homeless youth stated they had engaged in commercial sex for basic necessities. One of the most significant obstacles is that these young people are often seen as criminals rather than victims ([Polaris](#)). Victims often already believe they will be ignored by officials and medical providers if they report trafficking because of their minority sexual orientation.

A 2014 YES survey in Arizona found that 25% of homeless LGBT youth reported being human trafficking victims ([Polaris](#)). People, especially young people, without sufficient resources and support are most at risk to trafficking to meet basic survival needs. Human Trafficking is often closely related to drug addiction and violence.

California Attorney General Kamala Harris has made Human Trafficking a key policy issue and Governor Jerry Brown has signed several important anti human trafficking bills in recent years.

Kamala Harris led implementation of a bill authored by now Sacramento mayor Darrel Steinberg's SB 1193 that mandates specific local businesses post information for victims of Human Trafficking. This information provides local national resources for survivors. Sacramento, California non-profit Opening Doors led the implementation with a series of events called "Sac Post" where volunteers, staff, interns, and community members went to businesses with posters to ensure they were posted and ask businesses not mandated to post as well.

Several bills signed by Governor Brown in recent years have helped to decriminalize forced labor and protect the rights of victims. AB 1760 (2016) protects the rights of trafficked minors from prosecution and criminal records, diverting them to child welfare. California Proposition 35 (2012) establishes that forcing another person into labor for prostitution or sexual exploitation is a felony. AB 1761 (2016) creates a defense to crimes committed by persons while being trafficking and the dismissal of charges against minors. AB 1762 (2016) allows a court to vacate a conviction of a nonviolent crime and seal records when the crime was committed while a person was a victim of human trafficking.

Several resources include:

National Alliance to End Homelessness, <http://www.endhomelessness.org/>

National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC), <http://traffickingresourcecenter.org/>

Polaris, <http://www.polarisproject.org/>

Opening Doors, <http://www.openingdoorsinc.org/>

Rescue and Restore, <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/endtrafficking/resource/about-rescue-res...>