

# HIGH SCHOOL POETRY SLAM & ART COMPETITION

PRESENTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING & SOCIAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE  
**\$250 GRAND PRIZE, \$50 RUNNER UP**



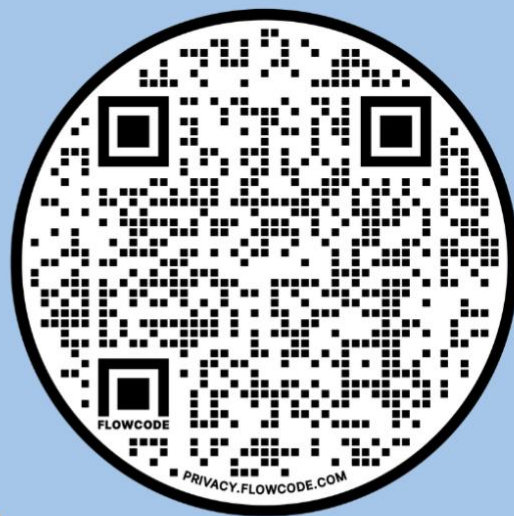
## **SUBMISSIONS DUE:**

OCTOBER 27, 2023  
BY 11:59 PM ET

## **OPEN VOTING:**

NOVEMBER 1-DECEMBER 31

**WINNERS ANNOUNCED:** JANUARY 5, 2024



[www.traffickingconference.com/high-school-workshop-poetry-art](http://www.traffickingconference.com/high-school-workshop-poetry-art)

INTERNATIONAL  
HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
& SOCIAL JUSTICE  
CONFERENCE

# Poetry Slam & Art Competition Topics

## 1. What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is the second largest (and fastest growing) criminal industry in the world. Men, women, and children are bought and sold for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation or forced labor. There are two main forms of human trafficking: sex trafficking and labor trafficking.

### *a. Sex Trafficking*

Sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, providing, obtaining, advertising, or soliciting of a person for a commercial sex act. This commercial sex act is induced by force\*, fraud\*\*, or coercion\*\*\* or in the cases in which the person forced to perform such an act has not reached 18 years of age. If the person has yet to reach age 18, there is no need to prove force, fraud, or coercion.

### *b. Labor trafficking*

Labor trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force\*, fraud\*\*, or coercion\*\*\* for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

**\*Force:** includes physical restraint, physical harm, sexual assault, and beatings. Monitoring and confinement are typically used to control victims, especially during the early stages of victimization in order to break down the victim's resistance.

**\*\*Fraud:** includes false promises regarding employment, wages, working conditions, love, marriage, or a better life. Over time, there may be unexpected changes in work conditions, compensation or debt agreements, or the nature of the relationship.

**\*\*\*Coercion:** includes threats of serious harm to or physical restraint against any person, psychological manipulation, document confiscation, and

## 2. Who are the victims?

People most likely to be at risk of human trafficking include:

- People of color
- Members of the LGBTQ+ community
- People living in poverty
- People who are experiencing an addiction
- Runaway Youth
- Foreign-born people
- People with disabilities
- People who have been abused

According to the International Labour Organization, there are about 40.3 million victims of human trafficking globally. 25% of victims are children, and 75% are women and girls. Forced labor and human trafficking is a \$150 billion industry worldwide. In 2018, it is estimated that about 403,000 people are living in some form of modern slavery in the

United States. Though anyone can be a victim of trafficking, those most likely to be victims are often vulnerable in some way.

Researchers developed an acronym to recognize child sex trafficking: **RESCUE CHILD**.

**R**unaway

**E**ducation (lack of)

**S**exual assault

**C**ourt appearances

**U**sing drugs/alcohol

**E**motional Abuse

**C**hild abuse/neglect

**H**omelessness

**I**nfluential others

**L**oving someone much older

**D**ifficulty making friends

*a. Sex trafficking?*

Vulnerable populations include runaway and homeless youth and victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or social discrimination.

In 2015, an estimated 1 out of 5 runaways reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children were likely to be child sex trafficking victims. The International Labour Organization estimates that there are about 4.8 million people trapped in forced sexual exploitation globally. In Ohio in 2017, 79% of victims were trafficked for sex.

*b. Labor trafficking?*

Factors making victims vulnerable for labor trafficking include:

- Immigration status
- Recruitment debt
- Isolation
- Poverty
- A lack of strong labor protections.

Labor trafficking occurs in many different industries including domestic services, farm work, factories, peddling, begging, restaurants, construction work, carnivals, and health and beauty services.

The International Labor Organization estimates that there are about 20.1 million people trapped in forced labor globally.

The US Department of Labor has identified at least 148 goods from 76 countries that were made by forced and child labor.

### 3. Who are the traffickers and buyers?

Traffickers and buyers can be any gender/sex, nationality, race/ethnicity, age, socio economic status, or level of education. Human traffickers and buyers can even be parents, partners, other family, and friends. Traffickers can be individuals acting alone or they can be part of an extensive criminal network, but all are willing to exploit the vulnerabilities of another for profit.

#### *a. Sex trafficking?*

Profiles of customers are diverse and include but are not limited to drug dealers, truck drivers, businessmen, teachers, lawyers, city and state employees, law enforcement, social workers, politicians, judges, and medical and healthcare workers.

#### *b. Labor trafficking?*

Profiles of traffickers include domestic work, housekeeping, begging, hospitality, carnivals, forestry, fishing, food service, health and beauty services, traveling sales crews, agriculture, retail, landscaping and construction, elder care, manufacturing, and the garment industry.

#### *c. Familial Trafficking*

This occurs when the trafficker is a member of the victim's family. They could be a parent, guardian, sibling, cousin, partner, or other relation. This is not mutually exclusive from labor or sex trafficking, but is important to recognize.

### 4. Why does it happen?

Prosecution rates for both sex and labor traffickers are still low, so human trafficking is a fairly lucrative business with minimal consequence. There are also social inequalities that make certain populations disproportionately more at-risk to be trafficked. Lack of education, conflict, violence, poverty, mass displacement, little to no access to education and job opportunities, and child marriage are all risk factors that drive victims into trafficking.

#### *a. Sex trafficking?*

There is a high demand for commercial sex (especially with young girls and boys) which drives the recruitment and exploitation rates up. Addiction could fuel victims to sell themselves in exchange for more drugs or alcohol.

#### *b. Labor trafficking?*

Money – there is high demand for cheap goods from consumers and a high desire for cheap production from companies. Those at the bottom of this economic food chain are the exploited workers. Those who are living in poverty are more likely to accept risky and shady job offers.

### 5. How are vulnerable people/victims recruited?

#### *a. Sex trafficking?*

Victims may become involved with someone who then forces or manipulates them into sex trafficking, lured with false job offers for modeling or dancing, or are forced/coerced by family and friends. 95% of recruitment strategies

traffickers use are manipulation. This starts with the trafficker bestowing gifts and compliments on the victim to build up their self-esteem and create a dependency on the trafficker. This is called grooming. Next comes “seasoning” in which the process of breaking down the victim starts, and the trafficker aims for complete control using a combination of physical, mental, and emotional abuse. This is when the trafficker renames and brands the victims, giving them a new identity. Branding can be a tattoo or other body marker to signify that the victim belongs to the trafficker, in the same way that farmers brand their livestock.

*b. Labor trafficking?*

Labor trafficking victims are often made false promises of high-paying jobs, exciting education, or travel opportunities. Some victims come from other countries under the false promise of better job opportunities where the victim will make a lot of money to be able to send back to their families. Traffickers use debt bondage to keep victims and their families working for them. This debt was formed during the recruitment process. To keep victims trapped, the debt they owe the traffickers keeps growing and the victims are never able to pay off the debt. Traffickers use a combination of coercion, fraud, violence, and some force to recruit and keep victims.

6. Where are the victims recruited?

*a. Sex trafficking?*

Social media is increasingly being used to contact, recruit, and sell children for sex. Social media allows traffickers to be able to exploit youth without having to meet face-to-face and also help to mask traditional cues that alert others to a potentially dangerous person. Social media also gives traffickers the ability to recruit multiple victims at once. Traffickers look for vulnerable youth which allows them to pose as a concerned peer to gain trust and befriend the victim in order to offer comfort. Once trust is gained, traffickers may ask for sexually explicit photos and use them as blackmail. Victims are also recruited on the street, especially those who have run away or are homeless.

*b. Labor trafficking?*

The false promise of lots of money to send back to families is alluring for many. Traffickers typically confiscate passports, identification, and any other documents, forcing the victims to follow and listen to the traffickers.

7. Where are places victims are sold?

*a. Sex trafficking?*

Many victims are sold online and then are forced to meet up with the clients at some predetermined location. However, there are also cases where victims are forced to wait for clients on the street.

*b. Labor trafficking?*

Victims of labor trafficking are sold to various companies in various professional fields (mentioned in question 2b). Labor trafficking victims are sold internationally not only to larger corporations, but also to individuals or families for domestic work.

## 8. What are the warning signs?

Many of the warning signs are similar for both sex and labor trafficking and include poor work or living conditions, force and abuse, and coercion and control.

Red flags in the work or living conditions include:

- not being free to leave/come and go as they please
- unpaid or paid very little
- works excessively long hours or unusual hours with no breaks
- harsh punishments for mistakes
- owes a large debt
- poor sanitation
- bug infestation
- no running water
- living in a confined space or at a work site.

Red flags concerning force and abuse include:

- Bruises
- deep cuts or scarring
- missing or broken teeth
- injuries to the head or black eyes
- dislocated limbs or fractures
- bald spots
- intentional or accidental burns (i.e., cigarette burns)
- Multiple miscarriages or abortions in a short amount of time
- Sexually transmitted disease

Red flags concerning coercion and control include:

- branding or tattoos
- being accompanied by a person that does not let the victim speak
- being unable to present identification documents
- Malnutrition
- untreated medical problems
- inconsistent stories
- addictive behaviors
- Fear
- Paranoia
- Anxiety
- depression

## 9. Where can victims go to get help/Where can you go to get help?

For both sex and labor trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline if you are in trouble or you suspect someone else is in trouble (1.888.3737.888). There is the BeFree Textline that is a confidential way to get help (text HELP to 233733 [BEFREE]). There are also local resources that can help the law enforcement FBI task force. One great local resource to call is the YWCA Crisis Center (419-241-3235) who has trained adults who can help in all types of crisis situations. You can always go to a **trusted** adult, parent, or teacher to talk to them about what is going on.

10. How can you reduce the risk of trafficking/How can you be safe?

For both sex and labor trafficking, educate yourself and your friends not only about what human trafficking is, but what factors make people vulnerable to be trafficked. Make sure that you and your friends know and have saved the various trafficking hotline numbers and are aware of the local resources and law enforcement numbers. If you suspect sex or labor trafficking is occurring, call the national hotline from a safe place.

11. How can you be an upstander (a bystander who steps up to do something)?

It is important to educate yourself and others. One way to do this is to set up an educational program in your school or in any groups you are involved in. Speak up and stop people when they are using victim blaming language, if they are glorifying or mocking pimp culture, or if they are being degrading towards vulnerable populations. You can also get involved in your local coalition. For those in Lucas County, Ohio, this would be Northern Ohio REACH.

*a. Sex trafficking?*

Know the online sites that youth are using and talk to your friends about the dangers of this. Save the National Human Trafficking Hotline (1.888.3737.888) to your phone (this is good for sex trafficking and labor trafficking). Keep the signs of sex trafficking in mind and talk to a **trusted** adult if you think something is going on. Contact the appropriate law enforcement agencies or the hotline.

*b. Labor trafficking?*

Go to [slaveryfootprint.org](http://slaveryfootprint.org) and take the quiz to determine how many slaves are working for you through the products you buy and the companies you support. Pay attention to Fair Trade Certified labels and recognize that they are there for a reason and not to simply force you to pay more money for a product. Talk to your friends about the products you buy. Research companies and research where you are getting your products. Keep the signs of labor trafficking in mind and talk to a **trusted** adult if you think something is going on.