



THE GOLDLAW REPORT

**SPRING
2024
EDITION**

BREAK THE SILENCE

YOU ARE STRONG. YOU ARE BRAVE. YOU ARE HEARD.

WE HOLD ACCOUNTABLE THOSE WHO HURT OTHERS.®

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

When the unforeseen becomes a reality, our mission is to provide hope, compassion, and guidance as your partners in recovery.



The Gold Standard

We strive for excellence in everything we do. We have resources to fight the insurance companies. We run a well-organized and stable practice that has given back to the community for more than 20 years.



Respect

We value our clients' time, respond to their needs, and diligently pursue their case. We support our coworkers, enjoy working together, and celebrate the successes of our teams.



Integrity

We conduct ourselves with professionalism in the office and in the community. We have strong moral principles. We are trustworthy and ethical.



Innovation

We've reinvented the practice of personal injury law. We empower our team to develop new ways to serve our clients. We pursue cutting-edge technologies to get the best results.



Compassion

We are sensitive to the trauma our clients have suffered, which drives our commitment to help them recover. We provide support during a difficult time. We practice compassion with our clients, our team, and our community.



Success

We have a strong record of winning. Our clients benefit due to our dynamic working environment and dedicated, long-term employees. Our leaders support and develop our teams.

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561.222.2222

 **GOLDLAW**
LAW OFFICES OF CRAIG GOLDENFARB, P.A.

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ABOUT THE COVER

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Human Trafficking: A Scourge in Palm Beach County

As the CEO at GOLDLAW, I take our law firm's Mission very seriously: "We hold accountable those who hurt others.®"

When it comes to helping to raise awareness about Human Trafficking, I have joined forces with a couple of community organizations to help to eradicate this awful scourge on our community.

Florida is the third highest state in the United States for frequency of human trafficking. Within Florida, Palm Beach County is the third highest county for such frequency. This is disturbing. That is why, in 2005, the Human Trafficking Coalition of the Palm Beaches (htcpb.org) was founded.

I joined this organization several years ago. Their purpose is to "prevent human trafficking in the Palm Beaches by building partnerships, fostering collaborations, identifying resources, and providing education and outreach." I joined the HTCPB to learn what efforts were being made to address this problem, and to lend my legal knowledge to the group.

More recently, I joined the board of the FLITE (Fort Lauderdale Independence, Training & Education Center. Founded in Broward County, FLITE established a presence in Palm Beach County in 2022. Their Mission is to guide young people aging out of foster care for successful transition to adult independence. They also provide free temporary housing to human trafficking victims, at their Center, in downtown West Palm Beach.

One of my goals in joining these organizations is to educate those who are assisting victims of what I call a "second path to justice". When a person is trafficked, and the perpetrator is arrested, the victim's focus may be only to make sure the perpetrator goes to prison. However, there is more to the legalities than the criminal



prosecution: a civil case for compensation may also exist within the justice system, against any persons or businesses that "enabled" the trafficking to occur.

For example, hotels and motels are often the site of human trafficking. Traffickers frequent the hotel, renting the room(s) for "an hour", and engaging in other activities that should raise the red flag to the hotel where trafficking is occurring. Within the hospitality and hotel industry, there are standards for training employees to recognize such patterns. If they fail to report the activity to the police, the business could be subjected to civil liability. In such a case, the victim may be entitled to monetary compensation.

By pursuing this "second path to justice" against enabling businesses, and by staying active in community organizations, I hope I can continue GOLDLAW's mission of "holding accountable those who hurt others.®".

For further information or to see how you can help, please see the Human Trafficking Coalition of the Palm Beaches website at www.htcpb.org and the FLITE Center's website at flitecenter.org.

Craig M. Goldenfarb, Esq.

Founder / Principal Attorney

The TVPA: A Beacon for Justice in Sex Trafficking Cases

In the traumatic realm of sex trafficking, legal representation is not merely about advocacy; it's about securing justice for those ensnared in its web. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 stands as a crucial legislative pillar, empowering lawyers to navigate the complex legal terrain and champion the rights of victims. As lawyers committed to upholding justice, understanding the legal issues surrounding the representation of victims of sex trafficking is paramount.

At the heart of legal representation lies the principle of ensuring access to justice for the most vulnerable. The TVPA serves as a cornerstone in this mission by defining sex trafficking and establishing robust legal frameworks for prevention, prosecution, and protection of victims. Under the Act, sex trafficking is recognized as a severe violation of human rights, encompassing the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of individuals for commercial sex acts through force, fraud or coercion.

For lawyers representing victims, one of the biggest challenges lies in establishing the elements of trafficking. We must adeptly gather evidence, utilizing testimony and documentation to substantiate our clients' experiences and secure justice under the provisions of the TVPA.

The representation of victims demands a holistic approach, encompassing legal advocacy, trauma-informed care, and access to essential services. The TVPA underscores the importance of victim protection, mandating shelter, medical care, and legal assistance to survivors. At GOLDLAW, we work to play a pivotal role in orchestrating this support network, collaborating with law enforcement, social, and medical services to safeguard the well-being of our clients.

The TVPA provides substantial penalties not just for the direct perpetrators of the crime, but



also against all corporations or individuals who may profit from sex trafficking. Oftentimes, this includes hotels/motels, employers of the trafficker and banking institutions. As counsel for numerous victims of the heinous criminal, Jeffrey Epstein, I was able to secure substantial recoveries for victims against some of the banking institutions that funded his activities using this very powerful act.

The legal landscape, however, is not without its obstacles. Victims of sex trafficking often face countless legal barriers, including immigration status, language barriers, and fear of retaliation. The TVPA seeks to mitigate these barriers by providing avenues for immigration relief, such as T visas for victims who cooperate with law enforcement and demonstrate extreme hardship. Lawyers must navigate these intricate pathways by advocating for their clients' rights while protecting their confidentiality and security.

At GOLDLAW, we see the representation of victims of sex trafficking under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) as a multifaceted undertaking, combining legal ingenuity with compassion and resilience. Despite the challenges presented, our steadfast commitment to restoring dignity and reclaiming rights remains resolute. In the pursuit of justice, every voice matters, and every victory manifests a step towards a world free from the shackles of sex trafficking.

Spencer T. Kuvin
Chief Litigation Officer

REVIEWS FROM HAPPY CLIENTS

How to submit?

Share your experience with the GOLDLAW team! You can let others know that you had a great experience with our law firm by leaving us an online review. Here's how to do it:

You need to have a Google or Gmail account to post the review. To open an account, visit www.gmail.com, and just follow the instructions! Once you have created your account, it's easy!

From Your Browser

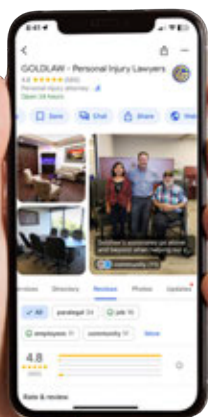
1. Log into your Google or Gmail account, and search Google.com for the business you want to review (in this case, GOLDLAW).
2. Find the reviews area, (next to the star rating in the search results, or under the business name in the sidebar in Google search). Click on the blue font that says "WRITE A REVIEW."
3. Rate from 1 to 5 stars (the more stars indicates a more positive experience), then write about your experience. Click "POST" when you are done.

From the Google Maps App

1. In the Google maps app on your phone, search for GOLDLAW.
2. Google Maps will return search result with a map that includes a banner at the bottom about GOLDLAW. Click that banner.
3. Scroll down in the window that pops up until you get to the Reviews section.

You will see "five stars" unpopulated with our profile picture above them. Click on the number of stars you want to leave for GOLDLAW, then write about your experience.

4. Click "POST" to leave the review.



5-STAR REVIEWS



SHELLY C.

January 2024



"We have had a great experience with GOLDLAW. All the staff we dealt with have been so patient and understanding, especially Diana Ramirez. They have amazing communication and have walked us through every part of the process so we know what to expect. We are more than happy that we decided to hire GOLDLAW and are completely satisfied with our results. I don't where we would have been without them."

SILVIA R.

February 2024



"We were really happy to deal with the awesome team at GOLDLAW. Our attorney was Rafael Roca, and he was very professional and respectful throughout the process. We are very pleased with the team as well. His assistant Adi was always reachable and patient with our many calls and questions. We could highly recommend this law firm. They treated us like family!"

KASLA C.

March 2024



"The professionalism and empathy shown to my family by Steven Escobedo and everyone at GOLDLAW is greatly appreciated. It was a headache finding an attorney during this difficult time, but the moment we spoke with Steven, we knew we found the right firm. The respect we were treated with gave us a great sense of security. I know GOLDLAW will make this right for my family. Thank you for your understanding and giving us such clear direction. Steven, you made going with GOLDLAW a no-brainer! Thanks to everyone for helping us."

KRISTINNE C.

March 2024



"Working with GOLDLAW is like having a legal pit crew – quick, efficient, and gets the job done without any hassle! They're like the superheroes of the legal world, swooping in to save the day with their expertise and dedication. Laura Rodriguez is like a friendly guide who led us through a maze, always there to ensure smooth sailing and satisfaction at every turn."

GOLDLAW EVENTS

For over 20 years, GOLDLAW has made it a priority to support our local community, partnering with events, causes, and organizations that do things to make Palm Beach County a better place. Here's a look at where GOLDLAW has had a presence so far in 2024:

- Fiesta de Pueblo
- South Florida Fair
- American Heart Month
- Wear Red for Women
- FLITE Center Collective Impact Awards
- Buena Vida Senior Day
- Village Walk Senior Day
- Hoops for All
- Horses & Hounds
- Lake Clarke Shores Annual BBQ
- Palm Beach Pride

Here are some highlights...

South Florida Fair – January 12 - 28

GOLDLAW went BIG at the 2024 South Florida Fair, doubling the size of the firm's booth, and distributing a record amount of swag! The big highlight was GOLDLAW Day on January 23rd, where firm staff were on hand to ride in the Parade and celebrate!



HOTG awards AED to Talented Teen Club! – February 26th

Heart of the Game (hotg.org), a non-profit charity created by GOLDLAW Founder/CEO Craig Goldenfarb, recently awarded an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) to the Greenacres-based Talented Team Club. The organization provides at-risk young people with the resources and support they need to build self-esteem and discover their talents.

FLITE Center Collective Impact Awards – February 27th

GOLDLAW has been a longtime supporter of this organization that provides area youth who are aging out of the foster care system with supportive services. This year, GOLDLAW's Founder/CEO Craig Goldenfarb was honored at their inaugural Collective Impact Award event.



Horses & Hounds – March 10

2024 marked the 6th year that GOLDLAW has been involved with "Horses & Hounds." This 501 c (3) foundation is dedicated to securing loving homes for equines and canines (horses and hounds!).

Lake Clarke Shores Annual BBQ – March 17th

GOLDLAW was proud to support Litigation Attorney Paul Shalhoub and his community of Lake Clarke Shores, as the town celebrated its biggest event of the year. 2024 marked the 29th year of this annual celebration!

Palm Beach Pride – March 24th

Supporting Palm Beach Pride is something the GOLDLAW team looks forward to each year. The firm joined more than 140 inclusive businesses that embrace the LGBTQ+ community for a day of celebration for all ages at Bryant Park in Lake Worth.



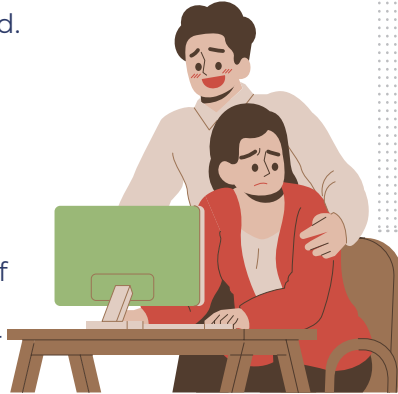
Sexual Assault by the numbers

**EVERY
68 SECONDS,**

an American is sexually assaulted.

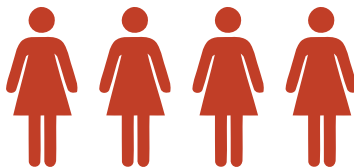
ON AVERAGE,
THERE ARE
**463,634
VICTIMS**

(age 12 & older) of rape and sexual assault each year in the U.S.



90% OF ADULT RAPE VICTIMS ARE FEMALE

16-19



Females age **16-19** are **4x** more likely to be victims of rape/attempted/rape/sexual assault. Long-Term Effects:

- **33%** of women who are raped contemplate suicide.
- **13%** of women who are raped attempt suicide.
- LIFETIME COST OF RAPE IS **\$122,461** per survivor, including medical costs, lost productivity, criminal justice activities, other costs...

More than **2 in 5** non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native and non-Hispanic multiracial women have been raped in their lifetime.

(These stats are from the CDC and RAINN)

IMPACT ON YOUTH

1 IN 9 GIRLS AND **1 IN 53 BOYS**



AND



under the **age of 18** experience sexual abuse/assault at the hands of an adult.

82% OF ALL JUVENILE VICTIMS ARE FEMALE

(Source: RAINN)

CAMPUS CONCERNS

Among undergraduate students, **26.4% of females and 6.8% of males** experience rape or sexual assault

(Source: RAINN)

MORE THAN 50% of college sexual assaults occur in August, September, October, or November, a time known as **"The Red Zone"**

(Source: NSVRC, the National Sexual Violence Resource Center)

LEGAL SUPPORT



The presence of a **lawyer or advocate** in a sexual assault case increases the likelihood of a **felony conviction** from

14% to 46%

(Source: NSVRC)

PROTECTION, PREVENTION, PROSECUTION:

Understanding the Federal Laws Combating Sexual Assault and Trafficking



IN RECENT YEARS, the United States has seen significant legislative efforts aimed at combating sexual assault, sex trafficking, and related forms of violence and exploitation. These efforts have included the enactment and reauthorization of several key federal laws. Notable among these are the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (VAWA), Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), and Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA). Each of these legislative acts addresses facets of sexual violence and trafficking, aiming to provide protection, support, and justice for victims, while also establishing methods to prevent these crimes and prosecute offenders.

The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2022 (VAWA)

Originally written by President Joe Biden in 1994 when he was a member of the Senate, and then Senator from Utah, Orrin Hatch, VAWA has been pivotal in fighting abuses of power and gender-based violence. The 2022 reauthorization broadened the act to include several critical enhancements for survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking:

Cybercrimes Against Individuals: VAWA established a federal civil cause of action for individuals whose intimate images are distributed without their consent, helping victims recover damages and legal fees.

Improvements in Prevention and Response:

The reauthorization improves prevention and response to sexual violence through increased support for programs like the Rape Prevention and Education Program and the Sexual Assault Service Program. It also expanded prevention education for students in higher education.

Support for Underserved Communities:

The act increased services and support for survivors from underserved and marginalized communities, including LGBTQ+ survivors. It funds survivor-centered, community-based programs, and increased support for culturally specific services and services in rural communities.

Expansion of Tribal Courts Jurisdiction:

It broadened the special criminal jurisdiction of Tribal courts to include non-Native perpetrators of sexual assault, child abuse, and sex trafficking on tribal lands. It also supported the

development of a pilot project in Alaska Native villages to enhance safety for survivors.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA)

First passed in 2000, the TVPA is the cornerstone of federal anti-sex trafficking legislation. It has been reauthorized multiple times to strengthen its core principles: Prosecution, Protection, Prevention. Key enhancements of the 2022 reauthorization include:

- Making the US Advisory Council on Human Trafficking Permanent
- Expanded Victim Support
- Reauthorization of Grants/Programs
- Improved Research & Reporting
- Stronger Federal Agency Response

Why are these enhancements significant? Because they are victim-centered, this increases resources and support for the healing and recovery of survivors. Sustainability was also addressed, because key structures and programs were made permanent, thereby strengthening the long-term anti-trafficking landscape. Finally, the enhancements helped make the legislation more effective by identifying areas for improvement, which has led to improved data collection and transparency, providing for enhanced accountability.

“By making the TVPA stronger, Congress has made our nation stronger,” emphasized Bradley Myles, CEO of the Polaris Project, which operates the National Human Trafficking Hotline. “Now we need to provide commensurate resources and leadership. In this fight. It’s time to put an end to the insidious crime of forced labor and sex trafficking here and around the world.”

The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA)

Originally enacted in 2015, this legislation enhanced support for victims and strengthened law enforcement tools through vehicles like these:

Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Fund: This fund provided support services for victims of child sex trafficking, which were derived from fines and penalties imposed in convicted traffickers.

U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking:

Created a council including survivors, service providers, and law enforcement to provide ongoing advice on the nation’s anti-trafficking efforts.

Mandatory Restitution: Required those convicted of trafficking offenses to pay restitution to victims.

Recent reauthorization has allowed for some notable improvements, including:

Focus on Online Trafficking: Strengthened tools for investigating and prosecuting online offenses.


Addressing Child Exploitation: Increased resources and efforts to prevent the online recruitment of children for sex trafficking.

Improved Data Collection: Provided the tools necessary to allow better tracking/reporting of trafficking cases to better pinpoint trends and allocate resources more effectively.

Support for Tribal Initiatives: Provided resources and support to address the unique challenges faced by trafficking victims in tribal communities.

“The Justice for victims of Trafficking Act sends a strong message that we will not tolerate the exploitation of our children,” said Senator John Cronyn. “By providing essential resources to support victims and holding offenders accountable, we can create a safer future for all Americans.”

The federal legislation addressing sexual assault and sex trafficking represents a hard-fought battle for justice and survivor protection. Acts like the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (VAWA), the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), and the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA) provide pathways to healing, work to deter perpetrators, and public education. These laws demonstrate a shift in societal attitudes and a commitment to dismantling systems of exploitation. Cindy McCain, Chair of the Human Trafficking Advisory Council, summed it up best:

“Human trafficking is a stain on humanity, and we must all stand together to end it. These laws are a critical step, but our work won’t be complete until every victim is safe and every trafficker is brought to justice.” 



THE POWER OF SUPPORT

Helping Survivors of Sexual Assault and Sex Trafficking

SUPPORTING A SURVIVOR of sexual assault or sex trafficking requires a compassionate, understanding approach that prioritizes the survivor's needs, feelings, and pace of recovery. Friends and family members play a crucial role in the healing process, offering a supports system that can significantly impact the survivor's ability to navigate the complexities of their emotions. Knowing how to respond appropriately is essential; this means knowing what to say, what to do, and most importantly, what to avoid, as you do your best to listen to, validate, and support victims of sexual assault.

Listening with Empathy and Without Judgement

Listening is the cornerstone of support for survivors of sexual assault or sex trafficking. It's important to provide a safe, non-judgmental space where survivors feel comfortable sharing their experiences at their own pace. Here's how to create a safe space for them:

Believe Them: "I believe you" are life-changing words for a survivor. Doubt and disbelief are often secondary traumas survivors experience, making your validation a gift.

Active Listening: Focus on hearing their words, understanding their feelings, and letting them lead the conversation. Avoid interrupting or offering advice unless they specifically ask for it.

Understand Their Emotions: Non-verbal cues can reveal far more about a person's feelings than their words alone. Observe their facial expressions (smiles, frowns, worried brows), body language (open posture vs. crossed arms/fidgeting), and tone of voice (soft, loud, shaky, sarcastic).

"The best way to support a survivor is to let them guide the conversation," says Rebecca Bender, survivor advocate and CEO of the Rebecca Bender Initiative. "Don't ask invasive questions or try to solve their problems. Your presence and unwavering belief are more powerful than you may realize."

Validating the Survivor's Feelings

Validation goes hand-in-hand with listening. Acknowledging the survivor's feelings and experiences as real and significant is essential for their recovery.

Validate Their Feelings: Phrases like "It's okay to feel angry/sad/confused" and "It's not your fault," while simple, help them know their emotions are justified.

Don't Pretend to Have All the Answers:

"Validating survivors' experiences doesn't mean you have to understand the 'why' of what happened," explains Dr. Thelma Bryant, Psychologist and President-Elect of the American Psychological Association. "Focus on affirming statements like: 'I'm so sorry this happened to you' and 'I'm here to listen whenever you want to talk.'"

Affirm Their Courage: Acknowledge the strength it takes to live through such an ordeal. A statement like, "It takes tremendous courage to talk about these experiences, and I'm here for you," can make a significant difference. This affirmation helps reinforce the survivor's resilience and strength, contributing to a sense of empowerment and self-worth.

Why focus on validation? According to Dr. David Lisak, a renowned psychologist and sexual assault researcher, “The most important thing survivors need to are people to believe them, to validate their experience, and to make it very clear that it was not their fault.”

Practical and Empowering Support

There are many other ways of showing support for and encouraging the healing process for victims of sexual assault. Also consider these practical methods:

Understand and Respect Boundaries:

Survivors of sexual assault often feel a loss of control over their bodies and personal space. Friends and family must respect the survivor’s boundaries and understand that recovery is a personal and non-linear process. Sometimes, they might need space; other times they may seek company. Let them lead the way.

Providing Practical Support: Practical support can range from accompanying the survivor to appointments, helping with daily tasks, or assisting in navigating the legal process if they choose to report the assault.

Encourage Professional Help: Professional help from therapists or counselors specializing in sexual assault and trauma can provide survivors with coping strategies and tools for healing. Encouraging survivors to seek professional help, when they are ready, can be a critical step in their recovery.

“When supporting a survivor of human trafficking, understand that trauma can manifest in different ways,” says Cindy McCain, Chairman Emeritus of the McCain Institute. “Patience, empathy, and respect for their boundaries are crucial elements of care.”

What NOT to Say or Do

It’s important to realize that there are well-intentioned phrases and actions that can unintentionally cause harm:

Avoid Blaming Language: Don’t ask questions like “What were you wearing?” or “Why did you go there?” These imply fault on the part of the survivor.

Don’t Minimize: Never say things like “It could have been worse” or “At least you’re still alive.” While trying to be positive, this diminishes their experience, and may increase their shame.

Don’t Pressure Them: Respect the survivor’s pace regarding reporting to authorities, seeking therapy, or talking about the details of their experiences. Pushing them before they’re ready may cause additional trauma and set back their recovery.

Supporting Yourself

Offering support for a loved one can be emotionally and mentally taxing. Here are some strategies family and friends can use to prioritize their well-being:

Learn to say “No”: It’s okay to set limits on how much support you can provide. It’s better to be available some of the time with full energy than to be available all the time with limited energy.

Don’t feel obligated to take on ALL

Responsibilities: You’re not a replacement for therapists or counselors. Encourage your loved one to seek professional help.

Prioritize Healthy Habits: Get good sleep, regular exercise, and maintain a healthy diet. Basic things like these go a long way in combatting stress.

Consider Therapy/Support Groups: A therapist can offer coping mechanisms and emotional support tailored towards your needs; Connecting with others who understand the experience of supporting victims offer validation and shared strategies.

Supporting a survivor of sexual assault or sex trafficking requires patience, empathy, and a continuing commitment to respond to their needs respectfully and thoughtfully. By listening, validating, and offering appropriate support, friends and family can play a crucial role in a survivor’s journey toward healing. And heed this advice from Kristen Houser, Chief Public Affairs Officer at the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSRVC):

“The process of healing is non-linear. There will be great days and there will be setbacks. Continue to be there, without judgment, to remind them they aren’t alone.” 🌀



UNRAVELING THE LEGAL PROCESS

A Guide for Sexual Assault Survivors

THE AFTERMATH of sexual assault is a storm of violation, vulnerability, and a profound sense of lost control. When survivors decide to confront the perpetrator and demand justice, they venture into yet another terrifying landscape: the legal system. Cast into an intricate tangle of procedures, unfamiliar terms, and the emotional burden of reliving the trauma, finding a pathway towards justice can seem overwhelming.

Your Rights: A Beacon through the Storm

“Sexual assault victims should not be expected to navigate the legal system alone, while dealing with their physical and emotional pain,” said GOLDLAW Chief Legal Officer Spencer Kuvn. Kuvn has represented numerous victims of sex crimes, including those who suffered at the hands of infamous predators like Jeffrey Epstein and Bill Cosby. “Victims have critical rights that serve as crucial safeguards in what is often a challenging journey.” Included among these rights are the following:

The Right to be Informed: Victims deserve to understand every step of their case, from developments in the investigation to decisions about pleas deals or potential court dates.

The Right to be Heard: The victim’s voice matters. The legal system must allow individuals to speak out in order to provide a platform for Victim Impact Statements where they can detail the far-reaching consequences of the crime.

The Right to Privacy: A victim’s safety is paramount. Their identity, and other sensitive details should remain shielded from public scrutiny to prevent further harm or intimidation.

The Right to Protection: If a victim fears retaliation, they are entitled to protection orders or other measures to ensure their safety.

The Right to Compensation: In some cases, there are methods to help victims pursue financial support from victim compensation programs to from the perpetrator directly.

Navigating the Legal Landscape

While the system promises justice, the reality for a survivor can be daunting. Reporting the assault to law enforcement initiates a process that could potentially include a medical exam to collect crucial evidence, a police investigation, and ultimately, charges brought by the prosecutor. If charges are filed, the accused appears in court, a plea is entered, and the legal battle truly begins.

“The criminal justice system can be very retraumatizing for survivors,” said Sandra Butler, LMFT, Director of the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (nsvrc.org). They may be blamed, disbelieved, or pressured to relive their assault in detail. This can be a significant barrier to healing.”

Potential Obstacles

Victims who pursue legal action often face significant hurdles, including:

Emotional Trauma: Recounting the assault, facing the perpetrator, and enduring cross-examination can be emotionally re-traumatizing.

Delays and Frustration: Court proceedings can be slow, with frequent delays, adjournments, and complex legal maneuvers.

Lack of Evidence: Securing sufficient evidence can be difficult, particularly in cases where there are no witnesses or significant time has passed since the assault.

Societal Stigmas: Victims may fear disbelief, judgment, or victim-blaming attitudes from people within the system and their own communities.

SEEKING JUSTICE

SUPPORT AND INSIGHTS



"The decision to report a sexual assault is a deeply personal one. Each survivor must weigh their options and make the choice that is right for them. There is no single 'right' path to healing."

- **Dr. Rebecca Campbell**
Professor of Psychology, Michigan State University

"The legal process can be re-traumatizing. It is essential for survivors to have access to mental health support throughout their journey."

- **Dr. David Lisak**
Forensic Psychologist specializing in trauma

"It takes tremendous courage to confront your abuser through the legal system. Remember, you are not defined by what happened to you. Seeking justice is testament to your resilience."

- **Laura Palumbo**
Communications Director,
National Sexual Violence Resource Center

"A compassionate and experienced lawyer can be a survivor's lifeline. They can guide you through the complexities, protect your rights, and fight for the justice you deserve."

- **Gloria Allred**
Renown Women's Rights Attorney

Why Victims Need an Unwavering Advocate

Facing the obstacles posed in a sexual assault case alone are beyond a victim's capabilities. A seasoned lawyer with experience in this area can be a transformative source of support, knowledge, and strength.

"My primary role is to empower my client, the victim," said GOLDLAW's Spencer Kuvin. "Survivors have been robbed of all control. It is my duty as their legal representation to restore that control through my knowledge of the system and serve tirelessly as an advocate for their rights." A lawyer who is an expert in sexual assault will do more than just navigate the legal complexities. The will also:


Demystify the System: Lawyers will guide victims through procedural twists, translating the complexities, and keeping clients informed through every step of the legal process.

Fight Tirelessly for You: As the victim's advocate, a lawyer becomes their voice in court, ensuring that rights are upheld, fighting to protect the client from re-traumatization, and guarding the individual's privacy at all costs.

Build Your Case: Lawyers will spearhead investigations, identify key evidence, and relentlessly work to construct the strongest possible case against the assailant.

Become Your Support System: The legal ordeal for a sexual assault victim is emotionally overwhelming. A dedicated lawyer can become a key source of understanding, support, and validation for the client during an extremely difficult time.

Justice is Possible

Seeking justice after a sexual assault is an act of incredible courage. While the legal system has its flaws and can often feel like an obstacle that can't be overcome, there is a path forward. Understanding your rights, anticipating the hurdles, and securing the help of a lawyer who serves as a fierce advocate can shift the balance. It won't erase the trauma, but it can create the possibility for accountability, a sense of closure, and the potential to prevent future harm. 

Sex Trafficking by the numbers

Average age of a child sexual trafficking victim is

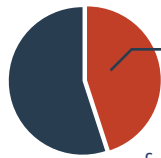
12-14
YEARS OF AGE



1 in 7 runaways are reported as child sex trafficking victims.

60-70%

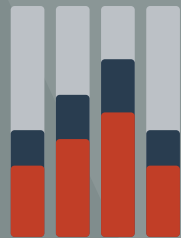
of trafficking victims are from the child welfare system.



45%
of victims are trafficked by a family member.

Online recruitment accounted for

65%
of reported trafficking cases in 2021



These stats are from ASPE & Polaris

EXTENT OF SEX TRAFFICKING

AN ESTIMATED

4.8M

people are forced into sexual exploitation globally.



(Source: International Labour Organization (ILO))



In the U.S., the Department of Justice identifies **California, Texas, and Florida** as the states with the

highest incidents of human trafficking reports

(Source: National Human Trafficking Hotline)

VICTIM DEMOGRAPHICS

99%

of the total global forced sexual exploitation victims are women and girls

(Source: ILO)

TRAFFICKING AND THE INTERNET

According to a 2018 study by Child Advocacy Organization THORN:

70%

of child sex trafficking survivors surveyed were at some point sold online.

55%

met their trafficker via text, a website, or use of an app.

75%

of the advertising done to traffic victims is done online.

LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

“

According to the Polaris Project, an increasing number of LGBTQ+ youth are becoming victims of sex trafficking due to high rates of sexual exclusion and marginalization.

”

CITIES WITH HIGHEST RATES OF SEX TRAFFICKING, ACCORDING TO THE FBI

Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Las Vegas

The Interstate **10** corridor has been identified by the FBI as the most significant human trafficking route due to its span from Florida to California...

TRAFFICKING VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT (TVPA)

Landmark Legislation that continues to address Human Trafficking

THE TRAFFICKING Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 is a landmark piece of U.S. legislation that addresses the issues of human trafficking and modern-day slavery. It is considered the cornerstone of federal anti-trafficking efforts for several reasons, and its periodic reauthorizations have strengthened and expanded its core principles and provisions.

Cornerstone of Federal Anti-Sex Trafficking Legislation

The TVPA of 2000 was groundbreaking because it provided a comprehensive approach to combat human trafficking, with a significant focus on sex trafficking. Prior to the TVPA, there was no comprehensive federal law to protect victims of trafficking or to prosecute their traffickers. The Act established these crimes as federal offenses and created mechanisms for the protection and assistance of victims by establishing a “3 P” framework for combatting sex trafficking:

- **Protection:** Providing safe harbor and support services for victims.
- **Prevention:** Raising awareness and deterring trafficking through education and foreign policy.
- **Prosecution:** Criminalizing trafficking and strengthening penalties for perpetrators.





Strengthening Core Principles through Reauthorizations

Since its initial passage, the TVPA has been reauthorized and strengthened multiple times. Each reauthorization has sought to address gaps in the legislation, respond to evolving understanding of trafficking phenomena, and enhance the support and protection for victims. Key enhancements of the 2022 reauthorization included:

- Strengthening the legal framework for prosecuting traffickers and protecting victims, including improvements in victims' access to restitution.
- Expanding prevention efforts to address the root causes of trafficking and to educate the public and vulnerable populations about the risks of trafficking.
- Enhancing support for survivors, including provisions for housing, job training, and other essential services to help survivors rebuild their lives

Significance of the Enhancements

The enhancements over the years are significant because they represent a more holistic and comprehensive approach to tackling human trafficking. By focusing not only on prosecution but also on prevention and survivor support, the TVPA aims to address the issue from multiple angles, reducing the prevalence of trafficking and improving outcomes for victims:

- **Technological Shift:** Traffickers increasingly exploit social media and online platforms, so methods to fight this tactic are constantly being evolved.
- **Victim-Centered Approach:** Increased funding has bolstered victim support services, a critical element in recovery. This has given rise to:
 - **Trauma-Informed Care:** Victims receive support that considers the psychological impact of trafficking.
 - **Legal Immigration Options:** Offers T visas, which allow victims to remain in the U.S. and assist law enforcement.

The legislation's evolution towards a more victim-centered approach has made a significant difference in the lives of survivors. "Human trafficking is a scourge on our society, and we must not lose sight of the victims who suffer terribly," said Senator John Cornyn of Texas. "This bill gives law enforcement additional tools and resources to go after the perpetrators of human trafficking, while providing critical support and services to the brave survivors." The TVPA represents a critical foundation in the fight against human trafficking in the United States. As the act continues to evolve through reauthorizations, it will hopefully lead to a future where this horrific crime is significantly diminished. 🌐

RESOURCES FOR VICTIMS

OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEX TRAFFICKING

Palm Beach County

Palm Beach County Victim Services & Certified Rape Crisis Center Helpline – (561) 833-7273
Toll Free – (866) 891-7273

Central Palm Beach County – (561) 355-2418

Western Palm Beach County – (561) 966-4871

Southern Palm Beach County – (561) 274-1500

Northern Palm Beach County – (561) 355-2418

TTY – (561) 233-2595

www.discover.pbcgov.org/publicsafety/victimservices

Victim Services SART Center (Sexual Assault Response Team) – (561) 625-6643

24 Hour Crisis Hotline – (866) 891-7272

TTY - (561) 624-6643

www.pbcsart.org

Human Trafficking Coalition of the Palm Beaches

If you THINK someone is being trafficked: (888) 373-7888

If you SUSPECT a MINOR is being abused or trafficked, Call DCF: (800) 962-2873

www.htcpb.org

State

Florida Coalition Against Sexual Violence (FCASV) – (850) 297-2000

www.fcasv.org

Florida Council Against Sexual Violence – (888) 956-7273 (Helpline)

www.fcasv.org/services

Florida Department of Children and Families – (800) 962-2873 (Abuse Hotline)

www.myflfamilies.com

National

National Sexual Assault Hotline (RAINN) – (800) 656-HOPE (4673)

www.rainn.org

National Human Trafficking Hotline – (888) 373-7888

www.humantraffickinghotline.org

Text “HELP” to 233733 (BEFREE)

Polaris Project – (888) 373-7888

www.polarisproject.org

Text “HELP” to 233733 (BEFREE)





IT'S ON US

Unmasking the Reality of Campus Sexual Assault

THE IDYLIC IMAGE of college life is being shattered by a harsh reality: sexual violence. Campus sexual assault remains a pressing concern across the United States, and understanding the magnitude of this problem is the crucial first step toward creating lasting change. Uncovering the statistics, exploring the devastating impact, and examining the ongoing fight for safe learning environments is essential if we are serious about protecting students.

Sexual Violence is a Crisis

To say that sexual violence on college campuses is pervasive is an understatement. "Unfortunately, female college-aged students across the nation experience disproportionately high rates of sexual violence," said Laura Palumbo, Communications Director at the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC). Data compiled by RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) reflects this fact:

- 13% of ALL college students experience rape or sexual assault.
- At the undergraduate level, 16.4% of females and 6.8% of males report being assaulted.
- At the graduate level, 9.7% of females and 2.5% of males report being assaulted.
- 5.8% of college students have experienced some form of stalking since entering college

The "Red Zone"

Numerous studies have shown that 50% of college sexual assaults take place between the start of fall semester and Thanksgiving break. This 3-month period, known as the "Red Zone," is particularly dangerous because perpetrators target freshmen and transfer students as they adjust to college life. Several factors contribute to this trend according to Dr. David Lisak, a renowned clinical psychologist and expert on sexual assault. "Alcohol and drug use play a significant role in creating situations where sexual assault is more likely to occur.

Why are perpetrators more active during this period? "First-year college students lack strong social ties that can offer them safer spaces to socialize – like house parties with a group of trusted friends," said Dr. Nicole Bedara, a sociologist and expert on sexual violence.

"It's On Us" to Find Solutions

While leaders on college campuses work to find solutions to sexual violence at their institutions, there are several federal programs there to help as well. One of the most prominent is It's On Us. Founded in 2014 as an initiative of the Obama-Biden White House, It's On Us has grown into the

nation's largest nonprofit program dedicated to college sexual assault prevention and survivor support. By activating students, the program is helping campus communities realize that the numbers don't lie:

- 20-25% of undergrad women are victims/survivors of sexual violence, but 90% DO NOT report it.
- 40% of rape victims suffer from severe emotional distress.
- 34.1% of students who have experienced sexual assault drop out of school.
- 40%+ of those who were sexually victimized also report experiences of "institutional betrayal."
- Sexually assaulted women are more than twice as likely to experience PTSD, depression, and chronic pain.

Prioritizing Prevention

What should schools be doing to educate students and staff about sexual assault on campus and how to prevent it? Many experts agree that one key is teaching the meaning of consent. "Teaching young people of all genders the importance of consent, effective ways to get involved as a bystander, and which resources are available to them for treatment are all ways to create healthier environments for students," said Halle Nelson, Communications Specialist at the National Sexual Violence Resource Center. Here are some other prevention strategies that universities are implementing:

Early Education

At many universities, freshmen and transfer students are required to complete an online sexual assault prevention course before they arrive on campus. At MIT, for example, the course includes definitions of consent and coercion, and explores the impact of alcohol. Courses at other schools' cover examples of healthy relationship interactions as well as information about assault prevention services available on campus. A 2021 study done by Duke University and EVERFI, Inc., showed that online sexual assault prevention courses have been shown to make a measurable impact on empathy and behavior.

Bystander Intervention

Bystander intervention was developed as a


response approach to other crimes but has more recently proven effective as a way to get peers involved in helping curb sexual violence on campuses. At the University of Oregon, in addition to completing a prevention course, students meet with trained peer advisers during the first two weeks of the fall semester. The sessions educate students about intervention, and how it can prevent potential assaults.

Assault Resistance Training

After completing a 12-hour program about sexual coercion, female first-year students at three Canadian universities were 46% less likely to be sexually assaulted than women who did not participate, according to a 2015 study of assault resistance training. Now used by a number of schools in the U.S., the program includes training in what coercion looks like, how to overcome the expectation that women should be agreeable and not make a scene, verbal and physical self-defense, techniques, and positive sexuality. Still, there is a long way to go. "There is strong evidence that this training is effective," said Dr. Sarah Peitzmeier, who researches gender-based violence at the University of Michigan, "yet less than a dozen universities use it."

Confidential Advocates

Already in place at some universities, including the University of Oregon and Rutgers, confidential advocate programs help assault survivors get the support they need. An advocate will know what support options are on and off campus, so that students can make informed decisions about what to do next. "These advocates are specifically trained," said Oregon's Associate Dean of Students, Jimmy Howard. "They ground our work, knowing that our end goal is to prevent violence from happening in the first place."

While the reality of college sexual assault is an ongoing issue, a movement is rising. Students are organizing, advocates are speaking out, and prevention programs are gaining traction. True change won't happen overnight. It requires persistence, uncomfortable conversations, and challenging the status quo. But, it is possible. The fight for safe campuses is a fight for a future where every student can pursue their dreams unburdened by the fear of sexual violence. 

SECURING A Safer Tomorrow

How Palm Beach County's SART and SVU are
Redefining the Response to Sexual Assault

THE PALM BEACH County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) was established to provide a coordinated, compassionate and multidisciplinary response to victims of sexual assault. Although the county had resources dedicated to support child victims of sexual assault, - the Special Victims Unit (SVU) - adults were often left without specialized care. Recognizing this urgent need, SVU spearheaded the creation of a dedicated response system for adult survivors.

The catalyst for SART came with a grant secured from the Florida Legislature, championed by

then-Senator Liz Benacquisto. The funding laid the groundwork for the establishment of a response team at Wellington Regional Medical Center. At the heart of SART is a team of sexual assault examiner nurses, specially trained in evidence collection and providing compassionate care to survivors. The Wellington facility offers a discreet and secure environment, with a separate entrance for victims, changing rooms, interview rooms, medical resources, and the ability for medical staff to dispense essential medications like anti-HIV and STD drugs and the morning-after-pill.



Palm Beach County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)

In conjunction with the Special Victims Unit, SART continues to evolve.

Who is involved and What do they Do?

- ▶ **Law Enforcement Agencies:** Respond to crime, work on investigation.
- ▶ **Medical Professionals:** Provide immediate medical care & forensic exams.
- ▶ **State Attorney's Office:** Offers legal guidance & prosecutes cases.
- ▶ **Victim Advocates:** Offer support and resources to help victims navigate the aftermath of an assault.

Functions and Activities Provided:

- ▶ **Coordinated Response:** By streamlining communications between medical personnel, law enforcement, and victims' legal counsel.
- ▶ **Victim Support:** Immediate and ongoing support through medical care, legal advocacy, and counseling.
- ▶ **Evidence Collection:** Conducts forensic exams to preserve evidence that could aid in prosecutions.
- ▶ **Awareness & Training:** Works to train professionals and educate the public about sexual assault and the importance of compassionate response.

Impact:

SART has been instrumental in improving the outcomes for victims of sexual assault in Palm Beach County. The teams comprehensive approach has led to:


- ▶ **Increased Reporting:** By providing a supportive environment, more victims are encouraged to come forward.
- ▶ **Higher Conviction Rates:** Effective evidence handling has led to stronger cases being presented in court.
- ▶ **Reduced Re-Traumatization:** Integrated care models have minimized the number of times victims must retell their story, reducing stress and improving recovery outcomes.

Multidisciplinary Approach Breeds Success

"SART's success stems from its multidisciplinary approach," said GOLDLAW Litigation Attorney Michael Kugler, a former prosecutor in the State Attorney's Special Victims Unit (SVU). Law enforcement victim services, prosecutors, victims, and community members banded together to form this network of support. Kugler played a crucial investigative role in this collaboration, as law enforcement relied on his expertise to guide them in obtaining search warrants and navigating the legal complexities of these sensitive cases.

Comfort Zone for Survivors; Victory for Prosecutors

SART also made it clear that while survivors are encouraged to report assaults, they weren't under any obligation to do so immediately. Another crucial element is SART's work in preserving evidence. Rape Kits are required to be preserved for a year; insuring evidence would be available should the victim decide to come forward later. This change of approach directly contributed to a significant rise in the number of reported sexual assaults. Prosecutors had long been at a disadvantage when it came to prosecuting these cases because they were underreported. Challenges included there being a lack of witnesses, the "fading" of witness memories, and evidence being misplaced or even lost. By playing a more active role in the investigation process, prosecutors improved their ability to build strong and ultimately successful cases.

In conjunction with the Special Victims Unit, SART continues to provide effective, compassionate, and specialized response to adult victims of sexual assault and sex trafficking. Its existence not only helps in holding perpetrators accountable, but also supports survivors in their journey towards healing, significantly impacting the community's handling of these severe offenses. Through their coordinated efforts, SVU and SART enhance both the immediate and long-term recovery of victims and improve safety and awareness in Palm Beach County concerning such crimes. 



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