

NAHT Monthly Board Meeting November 11, 2025

Present: Heather Brown, George Belitsos, John Chesser, Maggie Tinsman, Karl Schilling, Tom Barr, Shirley Reding, Shirley Fineran, Lyna Debner, Kim Hilby.

Guests: Andrea Keeling, Catherine Pollard (Advocacy Strategies)

Excused Absences: Teresa Davidson, Stephanie Olson, Brittany Sowder, Bernadette Rixner

Key takeaways

- Andrea Keeling from Iowa Victim Services Call Center presented statistics on human trafficking calls for fiscal year 2025: 208 primary victimization calls (194 sex trafficking, 14 labor trafficking) and 1,535 calls where trafficking was identified as past victimization
- The call center provides emotional support, safety planning, and referrals to local agencies but cannot report to law enforcement due to confidentiality requirements
- A key challenge identified is the high barrier to services for trafficking survivors, particularly requirements to completely exit trafficking situations before receiving help
- The Network Against Human Trafficking is advocating for \$1 million in state funding for human trafficking survivor services (up from \$150,000)
- The organization has made significant fundraising progress toward its \$20,000 annual goal and is preparing for Giving Tuesday on December 2nd

Iowa Victim Services Call Center Statistics

Andrea Keeling presented data on human trafficking calls received by the Iowa Victim Services Call Center during fiscal year 2025.

- **Andrea:** Reported 208 calls where human trafficking was identified as primary victimization (194 sex trafficking, 14 labor trafficking)
- **Andrea:** Reported 1,535 calls where trafficking was identified as past victimization (1,504 sex trafficking, 58 labor trafficking)
- **Andrea:** Explained that some callers experienced both labor and sex trafficking, which is why the numbers add up to more than the total
- **Maggie:** Asked for clarification on the difference between the two categories of calls
- **Andrea:** Clarified that primary victimization calls are from people currently seeking help for trafficking situations, while the larger number represents people calling for other reasons who disclosed trafficking in their past
- **Conclusion**
 - The call center handles a significant number of trafficking-related calls

- Sex trafficking represents the vast majority of reported cases rather than labor trafficking
- The actual number of trafficking victims is likely higher as many may not disclose their experiences

Call Center Services and Confidentiality

Discussion about what services the call center provides and confidentiality limitations.

- **Andrea:** Explained they provide emotional support, safety planning, referrals to local agencies, and help callers understand their options
- **Maggie:** Questioned what happens with the information collected and whether police are notified
- **Andrea:** Clarified that, due to VOCA and VAWA funding requirements, they cannot report to law enforcement without the caller's consent
- **John:** Asked about referrals to direct service providers
- **Andrea:** Confirmed they refer to organizations like Wings of Refuge, Dorothy's House, Lila May's House, and others
- **Shirley:** Asked about their process for making referrals and following up
- **Andrea:** Explained they do "warm transfers" when possible and encourage callers to call back if they need additional help
- **Conclusion**
 - The call center is bound by strict confidentiality requirements
 - They provide various support services while respecting caller autonomy
 - They refer to both state-funded and private organizations that serve trafficking survivors

Challenges in Serving Trafficking Survivors

Discussion about barriers to services for trafficking survivors.

- **Andrea:** Identified a key challenge being programs that require survivors to completely exit trafficking situations before receiving services
- **Andrea:** Noted that substance use disorders often co-occur with trafficking
- **Shirley:** Explained the provider perspective - safety concerns for other residents when survivors are still in contact with traffickers
- **Shirley:** Mentioned they reduced their drug-free requirement from 30 days to 2 weeks but still face challenges
- **Shirlee:** Suggested homeless shelters as potential emergency resources for trafficking survivors
- **Conclusion**
 - There's a gap in emergency services for trafficking survivors

- Providers face legitimate safety concerns that create barriers to immediate service
- More funding is needed for emergency services that can address immediate needs

Legislative Advocacy

Discussion about efforts to secure state funding for trafficking survivor services.

- **Maggie:** Urged board members to contact their state senators about supporting \$1 million in funding for human trafficking survivors
- **Maggie:** Read a letter to Governor Reynolds requesting increased funding for the Human Trafficking Survivor Services Fund from \$150,000 to \$1 million
- **John:** Mentioned that HF1036 for the upcoming legislative session would mandate the use of a screening tool for human trafficking
- **John:** Noted that Representative Thompson will join the December meeting to discuss legislative matters

• Conclusion

- The organization is actively advocating for increased state funding
- They are supporting legislation to improve identification of trafficking victims
- Board members are encouraged to contact their legislators before January 1st

Fundraising Update

Tom provided an update on fundraising efforts and strategies.

- **Tom:** Reported significant progress toward the \$20,000 annual goal with recent donations
- **Tom:** Noted they are 57% toward their Giving Tuesday goal of \$7,500
- **Tom:** Emphasized the importance of visibility through wearing "Stop Human Trafficking" t-shirts
- **Tom:** Shared an anecdote about women in a book club being surprised that trafficking still happens in Iowa
- **George:** Reported \$4,315.09 in income for October, including donations from First Reformed Church and board members

• Conclusion

- The organization has made significant fundraising progress
- Giving Tuesday (December 2nd) is a key upcoming fundraising opportunity
- Increasing visibility remains important as many people are unaware of trafficking in Iowa

October minutes: acceptance moved by Maggie, seconded by Karl and approved unanimously.

October treasurer's report: acceptance moved by Tom, seconded by Maggie and approved unanimously. Beginning checking balance \$17,485; ending balance \$15,486. Expenses \$6,314, including \$5,000 semi-annual payment to Advocacy Strategies; Deposits \$4,315.

Action items

- **All Board Members**

- Contact state senators about supporting \$1 million in funding for human trafficking survivors (before January 1st)
- Share the Giving Tuesday flyer on social media when Tom resends it
- Like and share Dr. George's blogs and newsletters on social media
- Wear "Stop Human Trafficking" t-shirts to events for visibility

- **Andrea**

- Email the human trafficking call statistics to John
- Ask staff if callers mention trying the national hotline first

- **John**

- Start working with the governor's office on who will present awards in January

- **Tom**

- Resend the Giving Tuesday flyer to all board members

- **George**

- Donate \$500 matching gift for Giving Tuesday (December 2nd)

- **Maggie/Marielle**

Send the Governor Reynolds letter to the whole board