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## SPEAKERS

Jenn Tostlebe, Joan Reid, Jose Sanchez

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Jose Sanchez 00:00

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Jose Sanchez 00:31

Hi everyone, welcome back to The Criminology Academy podcast where we are criminally academic. My name is Jose Sanchez.



Jenn Tostlebe 00:38

And my name is Jenn Tostlebe.



Jose Sanchez 00:40

Today we are excited to have Professor John Reid with us to discuss one of her primary research topics: human trafficking.




Jenn Tostlebe 00:49

Joan Reid is an Associate Professor of Criminology at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg and the Director of the USF Human Trafficking Risk to Resilience Research Lab located on the St. Petersburg campus. She received her PhD in Criminology from University of South Florida in Tampa, FL. Her research interests include human trafficking, exposure to

violence, child maltreatment, and trauma-informed care. Dr. Reid is also a licensed mental health counselor (LMHC), and has counseled individuals recovering from sexual trauma, including youth in foster care and detained in juvenile justice facilities, for over fifteen years. Thank you so much for joining us, Joan.

 Joan Reid 01:27

I'm so excited to be here. I appreciate the invitation.

 Jose Sanchez 01:31

Yeah, we're looking forward to this discussion. So just a quick overview of what we will be talking about today, we will first start out with some general human trafficking questions, then we're going to move into a paper that was authored by Joan and some of her colleagues about human trafficking, and then we're going to wrap up with a brief discussion of human trafficking and the internet. So with that being said, Jenn, why don't you take it away?



Jenn Tostlebe 01:57

All right. Thanks, Jose. Okay, so our first question, like we always start out on this podcast, is this very broad question that perhaps is difficult to attach a very concise definition to but... Joan, can you tell us what human trafficking is?

 Joan Reid 02:15

Yes. So human trafficking is profit driven exploitation of men, women, and children. So it needs all of those components, it needs to be profit driven. So it's about making money, or some other kind of profit. And it's in the process of exploiting men, women and children. And it's usually facilitated by force, fraud, or coercion. And it can exist in many, many venues. So in job sectors, ranging from like agriculture, hospitality, which I'm in Florida, so that's a big, you know, big sector where you'll see human trafficking in Florida, to manufacturing. So, you know, often we kind of think of slavery as something in the past, but human traffickers generate billions of dollars every year through exploiting men, women and children in labor or sex trafficking.



Jenn Tostlebe 03:05

So those would be the two main types of exploitation then? Labor and then sexual...

 Joan Reid 03:12

Particularly in the United States. So you know, when you go to other countries, often you'll see other forms of exploitation, for example, child soldiers, or, you know, people trafficked for organs, right, we see that a little bit less in the US. So in the US, it's mostly sex trafficking, labor trafficking, or, and often it involves debt bondage.



Jose Sanchez 03:33

Debt bondage. What is that exactly?



Joan Reid 03:35

So that's what let's say someone, maybe legitimately, well, legitimately, voluntarily is smuggled across a border, for example. And so they pay, you know, a Coyote, or a smuggler, whatever you want to label them a certain sum of money, or maybe their brother or sister does. And then once they get into the United States, or into the destination country, all of a sudden, no, you owe another \$30,000. Like, all of a sudden, the bill they they gotta pay is \$30,000. Right? And so then, so they're in debt. So that's where the word debt bondage comes from. And so but then at the same time, they may be living in an apartment with 10 other people eating food that's provided by the trafficker, and the trafficker will, you know, they have to pay the trafficker for rent, food, transportation, and so it's in that they can charge them any price they want, right for that, and so they never get out of debt. And so that's what debt bondage is.



Jose Sanchez 04:39

Okay, so we realize that this is probably one of the more difficult topics to research. And, you know, estimates are hard to come by, but could you give us maybe an estimate of how many individuals fall victim to human trafficking?



Joan Reid 04:54

Right, that is one of the prevalence of human trafficking is one of the hardest answers to give you right? It's just and people have looked at it many, many different ways through different forms of research. And more research is needed on the scope. But here's a few statistics from the International Labor Organization. So they have been looking at the numbers, at this problem for a long time, so they have kind of set methodologies to look at the prevalence, and they estimate that there's 40.3 million victims of human trafficking globally. 81% of them are trapped in forced labor, 25% are children and 75% are women or girls. So that's 40.3 million people globally,



Jenn Tostlebe 05:37


Has that number increased over time, or decreased, or stayed the same, do you know?



Joan Reid 05:43

Wow. I don't I can't, I really don't know how to answer that question. I should. So you know, I know that it's a shocking number 40 million, you know, because I think the percentage of people in your know, if you want to call it human trafficking, or modern day slavery, the

people in you know, if you want to call it human trafficking, or modern day slavery, the percentage maybe has gone down, but because the population globally is so large, the actual number of people in human trafficking continues to go up. That's my guess.

 Jose Sanchez 06:11

Yeah, that's a lot of people.

 Joan Reid 06:12

Right?



Jenn Tostlebe 06:13

All right. So when I'm thinking about this subject, my mind typically goes to movies like Taken in pop culture. And typically when you see human trafficking in the world of pop culture, it's usually in Europe or Asia. And so would you say that human trafficking happens more often overseas than in the United States? or about the same or vice versa?

 Joan Reid 06:36

Well, that's a really interesting question. And it does occur in the United States. And so countries are kind of divided into three types of countries who are involved in human trafficking. So kind of a source country. So where that victims are coming from the source of the trafficking. Transit country. So that's a country that where people are just moving through that country for like, let's think of Mexico, maybe as a transit country. So people are moving from Guatemala, they're moving through Mexico, that would be a transit country. And then you have a destination country. So that's where the person is actually exploited. And the US is usually ranked pretty high under destination country, and so not as much as a source or transit. But as a destination country, we're usually ranked rather high.

 Jose Sanchez 07:28

Would you be maybe able to walk us a little bit give us like a general sense of what it looks like? Or what the process of human trafficking [looks like]?

 Joan Reid 07:36

Yeah, so there's different stages of human trafficking, right. And so, you know, the specific actions are different depending on the type of human trafficking, right, but there are some general phases. One is that the trafficker gains the victims trust, in some way. Identifies a vulnerable person, gains their trust, provides them in some need for some need, that they have some urgent need they have. And then at that point, they begin to isolate the victim and exploit them. So that's kind of generally the phases but there are so many steps like there's

recruiting. So there's people who like overseas at a travel agency, maybe it's a fraudulent travel agency, right. And so, let's say this travel agency in Europe, right, and they're recruiting for a trafficker here in the United States, right. And so a person may come to the United States thinking they're going to do one thing. And then when they get here, they're, you know, tricked into human trafficking. So there's different stages, there's generally recruiting, advertising, and then selling.



Jenn Tostlebe 08:39

And then, given that today, as far as your paper goes, our focus is going to be more on juvenile human trafficking. Can you talk to us a little bit about who is most likely to be involved? Or who is most likely to be a trafficker of minors, for example, whether it's a stranger or someone the child knows, or someone else?



Joan Reid 09:00

Yeah, so I want to start by saying the most common characteristic of a victim of trafficking is that there's no one really looking out for them. And so a trafficker can be, these are estimates based on my case files, what are the research I've seen, right, so maybe about a third are what we would consider a stranger. And of course, eventually, the child or the adolescent doesn't consider them a stranger, there might be a friend of a friend of a friend of a friend who they somehow met, right? And so they really don't have a relationship with them except, you know, kind of in this trafficking efforts or trafficking crime. So about a third I would classify as like strangers, and then there's like kind of a third that kind of have some type of relationship with the minor so it could be boyfriend, girlfriend, pseudo boyfriend/girlfriend, who are just like pretending to be in love with them in order to manipulate them, right. Or an employer or maybe they're providing drugs for this kid. And so they have some kind of relationship. And then about a third are family members or relatives. And so that's kind of the families involved in human trafficking, maybe part of a human trafficking sex ring, right? Or the mother or aunt or sister is addicted to drugs and may sell a sibling for sex in order to get drugs. Those are some of the most tragic cases. And you'll see those on the news sometimes and it just breaks your heart.



Jenn Tostlebe 10:27

I was gonna say I thought I'd seen some case, I don't remember when but where a parent was selling their child because they needed money for some reason. And so I was just curious how common that was. So it sounds about 30-33% of the victims have experience, which that's Yeah, that's really tragic. And I'm from Iowa. So where interstate 80 and 35 meet. I don't know if you've done research on that area at all. But it's a really common area for trafficking circles. So we see it on the news a lot in that area.



Joan Reid 11:02

I mean, the traffickers use the transportation, you know, it's convenient, it's got the convenience of the interstates really makes it easy for traffickers to move their victims within the United States

the United States.

**J** Jose Sanchez 11:13

Yeah. I'm from Los Angeles. And you hear about this all the time in Long Beach, because it has the harbor. Long Beach considers it a pretty big problem. They're considered a hotspot for trafficking.

**J** Joan Reid 11:29

Right? You have like different community risk factors, right? And when those community risk factors kind of come together with vulnerable individuals, you're going to end up with trafficking.

**J** Jose Sanchez 11:40

Yeah. What are some of the characteristics that a trafficker might look for in the child or adolescent?

**J** Joan Reid 11:46

Yeah, I'm gonna repeat myself, because I think it's such an important comment is that they look for someone who doesn't have anyone looking out for them. So just think about who that might be. Right. So I think that's kind of the characteristic where we see foster kids getting involved in this because they don't have like a strong family, looking out for them, or, you know, the guardian, what we would call it criminology, the guardian, right, the person who's supposed to be guarding them is actually the trafficker. It's part of their family. Right. And so that is really a common characteristic they look for. And then as you'll see, from my paper, there's just a broad spectrum of vulnerabilities that can put someone higher risk for trafficking.



**Jenn Tostlebe** 12:25

Okay, so switching now, kind of into the idea of preventing or looking after human trafficking in the United States. How does the United States respond to juvenile human trafficking and have political or legislative or other responses kind of changed over time?

**J** Joan Reid 12:46

That's a great question and it has changed significantly. So I began researching human trafficking, mostly in Florida, mostly kind of stayed in my home state where I'm living, and mostly looked at child trafficking in Florida. And so I began that in 07. So 2007. So that's a long time ago, what, 15 years ago now. And so at that point, really, I could tell you some hilarious stories about calling, you know, like the head of some child protective unit and asking, like, have you had any cases of domestic minor sex trafficking, which is, you know, US children. And

they'd be like, no, like, never right? That never happens here. We've never seen it. And at that point, I just kind of did a review and there was one or two human trafficking arrests in Florida, but 400, 400 kids had been arrested for prostitution. Alright, so in this kind of span of time I was looking for and so in the past, that was really what how kids who got trafficked, sex trafficked were treated was they were picked up as prostitutes. And you know, given that charge, seen as promiscuous, seen as really bad kids. It's taken a long time for that perspective to change. I mean, you have to think about it. Like, let's say you're law enforcement, you've been doing this job for 20 years, and that kid's always been labeled an offender and you've picked him up and maybe even thought you were kind of keeping them safer by arresting them. Right. And so that's taken a long, long time for people's perspectives to change. And I see even now that people just miss cases, because they have this misperception of what human trafficking is. And so, you know, you'll be reading a case file and it's very, very, very, very clear to you. This is human trafficking, you know, Father sold child, you know, in the notes, and yet, whoever's assessing them from human trafficking will write no indicator, right? And so you're like, wait a minute, there's an indicator right here. And why did you miss that? And it's just because people don't, it's kind of a new way of looking at a problem that they have. You've got to, you know, it takes a while for perspectives to change and for these kids who are really vulnerable and victimized to be seen as victims rather than offenders.



Jenn Tostlebe 15:04

So that is changing over time. So are there any like official like US policy responses to human trafficking? Or is it more like state by state or even smaller geographical locations?



Joan Reid 15:17

Well, you know, so and want to get my years, right. So initially, when they passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, it really focused mostly on international victims in the US, right. And then a few years later, I think people kind of pushed for legislation to protect US citizens who were being trafficked. And so there is some federal statutes that give protection. But it also, you know, a lot of the policies and statutes are state by state. So I have to brag on Florida a little bit, I mean, every year Shared Hope International puts out a state grade gives every state a grade, and this year, Florida was the only state to get a passing grade--a C--all the other states got D's or F's, but you know, as a student and faculty that a C's not good enough, right? We need to do more. But so I'm really glad that Shared Hope does that every year, because it kind of puts the states on notice, hey, this is where you can improve, you know, almost like they're kind of pushing the states to improve their policies in their statutes. So it's really a good thing.



Jose Sanchez 16:24

Yeah, I know. Several years ago, California decriminalized child prostitution and people are losing their minds. They're like, Oh, you're just promoting child sex and child prostitutes. And obviously, they hadn't read the bill. Because what he was really meaning to do was, we're not going to arrest these kids, instead of having them be the police's issue, we're going to refer them to a social worker. So that was one of their attempts to sort of address the problem. You

know, I haven't been in California in several years, so I don't know exactly how it's going. But it's just one of those things where, and then people see this headline, California decriminalizes child prostitution, and...

**J** Joan Reid 17:10

Right, it wasn't at all basically, you know, Florida did that. Also, we're so we didn't have that situation where there was 400 kids being arrested for prostitution, right, it was probably a five year period, but it doesn't matter. It was a lot. You know, cuz, you know, they're usually even, you know, back then. They did not necessarily arrest they did more, how would you say it so they would arrest them for truancy or loitering or something. I mean, even back then they try not to arrest them for prostitution, so that there was 400 arrests was really amazing and disturbing. And it just doesn't do much to address the problem to keep arresting the victims, obviously. Right. So.

**J** Jose Sanchez 17:52

So since we're sort of on that topic? Well, I would think that it'd be hard to run a human trafficking operation, given how many moving pieces it appears to have, but how difficult is it to police human trafficking?

**J** Joan Reid 18:08

Well, I'll talk to you just mostly about child, you know, juvenile sex trafficking, because that's kind of my area, but it is super difficult. And part of it is you need the victim's or survivor's cooperation, right, in order to be successful at prosecuting and identifying, even identifying right, the person that's being trafficked. And so but often the victims don't self identify, they rarely self identify, because they're, I would use the term brainwashed in a way by the trafficker to believe that they're the ones who are committing the crime. Right. And so they don't go to law enforcement, they don't go to the authorities, because the traffickers convinced them, if you go to the authorities, you're going to be arrested. And unfortunately, that often happens. It doesn't necessarily maybe they're not being arrested for prostitution, but they may be arrested for other crimes that are, they're committing on behalf of the trafficker, right. And so that is one of the tools in the trafficker, that they use to manipulate and control is they'll often immediately have a child that's coming into their, you know that their grooming, they'll have them commit a crime, right? And so then they'll be like, okay, look, you go turn yourself in, and we'll see what happens to you. You're going to be arrested, you're going to be put in juvenile detention. And so that is one of the ways that traffickers manipulate kids is by having them commit a crime on their behalf, and then using that to control them.

**J** Jose Sanchez 19:36

Okay, well, I think that sets up to move into the paper that we're gonna be discussing today. So, again, the paper was authored by our guest Joan, as well as her colleagues Michael Baglivio, Alex Piquero, Mark Greenwald, and Nathan Epps: "No youth left behind to human trafficking: Exploring profiles of risk" and was published in the American Journal of



Orthopsychiatry in 2019. In this paper you and your colleagues use data on 913 male and female juvenile-justice-involved adolescents with suspected or verified juvenile human trafficking abuse reports documented between 2009 and 2015 and a matched comparison group to analytically identify six risk profiles for juvenile human trafficking based on adverse childhood experiences, such as child abuse or foster care, and health risk behaviors, such as weapon use during an offense, drug use, or suicidal ideation or attempt. Is that a fair introduction?

 Joan Reid 20:47

That's a great summary.

 Jose Sanchez 20:49

Summary, there you go.



Jenn Tostlebe 20:54

Alright, so to get us started here, in your paper, one of the core conversations involves changing the way we think about the risk profile of juvenile human trafficking victims. And I know we've asked this in a few different ways. But to get into kind of the more specifics here, when we're currently thinking about the typical risk profile of a juvenile human trafficking victim, what comes to mind for most people or politicians?

 Joan Reid 21:21

So what comes to mind is really, it's kind of, I like to think about it like it's a new crime or new problem we're looking at, and you kind of think of it in my mind is way, like, you walk into a room and you have a flashlight. And there's like people all in the room, but you shine the flashlight on the first kid, you see, right. And so that's the profile that people have childhood juvenile sex trafficking in the United States. And that's kind of the first most evident, most evident victim, which is a runaway, abused child in foster care. And they just become the first ones that were super apparent when we started to look. And so that became the dominant perspective on who's a victim of trafficking in the US. So yeah, so foster care kid who's, you know, abused in multiple ways, and who's running away and trafficked by a stranger.



Jenn Tostlebe 22:13

And this might be obvious to some of us, but Why might it be problematic for researchers and policymakers to grab on to that specific risk profile? And just focus on that?

 Joan Reid 22:26

It's really important for prevention, right? So if you're only thinking like, okay, so it's a foster

care kid who's been abused? So where are you going to aim your prevention efforts, right at that type of child, and you're not going to be necessarily using prevention methods with other kids, you're not going to be preventing that from happening to the other kids who don't look like that. Right. And so, my concern, and the reason that my purpose behind this paper was like, you know, I've been part of this research, and I've been someone who's been shining that flashlight on this particular type of kid. And I don't want to be overlooking, systematically overlooking the other kids who could be in danger for human trafficking, particularly for prevention efforts, right. So if we're funding prevention, we don't want to miss you know, a huge group of kids.

J Jose Sanchez 23:15

So your paper is based, like we mentioned on the Adverse Childhood Experiences framework or the ACEs framework, broadly speaking, can you tell us what aces are, and maybe a few examples of ACEs?

J Joan Reid 23:27

So ACEs are adverse childhood experiences, right? And there's, in kind of the research, the large body of research on ACEs, there's 10 ACEs, right? 10 classic ACEs and it's emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional neglect, various forms of child maltreatment, physical neglect, and then family violence, household substance use, household mental illness, parental separation or divorce, household member incarceration. And then in this paper, I added foster care placement as an 11th ACE and there was other researchers previous to my research that were suggesting, hey, we need to add foster care as an adverse childhood experience. So those are the ACEs.

J Jose Sanchez 24:13

I'm a little surprised that foster care wasn't on there. You'd think that that the kind of obvious as an adverse childhood experience.

J Joan Reid 24:21

Right, right, well, we added it for this paper.

J Jose Sanchez 24:25

Okay, so how does the ACES framework apply to juvenile human trafficking victims?

J Joan Reid 24:32

Well, you know, prior research before, you know, that has looked at risk factors for juvenile human trafficking, and has found that many, many, many of these aces are, you know, create this vulnerability. You know, some of the research I did found that, you know, caregiver strain

this vulnerability. You know, some of the research I did found that, you know, caregiver strain, we'll talk about it in terms of a criminological theory that caregiver strains, which is caregiver mental illness or incarceration kind of creates that pressure on the family. And then that leads to child maltreatment, neglect, emotional neglect. And then that leads the child to become vulnerable to human trafficking.

 Jose Sanchez 25:08

Yeah. And you meant in the paper, you mentioned that a lot of them also report childhood histories of not just physical abuse, but also sexual abuse.

 Joan Reid 25:20

Yeah, so interesting. Lee, I've done some research on male victims of commercial sexual exploitation. And in that research, I found that so I had kind of a similar type setup, where I had boys who had been victims of human trafficking and those who hadn't, and those that were victimized in commercial sexual exploitation were eight times more likely to have been sexually abused. And so it's a huge risk factor, sexual abuse, for human trafficking.



Jenn Tostlebe 25:48

Okay, and then you also examine what you're calling health risk behaviors in this study. So can you describe what some of these are? So some examples, and then why they were important to include in addition to these adverse childhood experiences.

 Joan Reid 26:04

Okay, so health risk behaviors really comes from the CDC, and they have a lot of research on health risk behaviors, and, you know, behaviors that kids have that put them at risk for violence, for injury, for health problems, or death, right. And so, I wanted to include those because often those have been also been linked to human trafficking, such as drug use or alcohol use, has different ways of putting a child at risk. For example, I think I mentioned before that sometimes drug dealers turn into traffickers, right. And so any kind of vulnerability like that just increases someone's risk for human trafficking. So I wanted to look at those health risk behaviors, in addition to adverse childhood experiences,

 Jose Sanchez 26:47

To put together the juvenile human trafficking information, you and your colleagues use data from the Florida Abuse Hotline. Can you tell us a little bit more about this process and how common it was for the hotline to receive juvenile human trafficking reports?

 Joan Reid 27:03

This is part of my research that's super interesting to me because I see how how prior research

This is part of my research that's super interesting to me because I see how, how prior research really impacts future research. So one of the first, as I told you, I did a study in 2007, on juvenile human trafficking in Florida. And I found from interviews, I, you know, interviewed dozens of people who would be potentially coming into contact with human trafficking victims. And one of the things that they kept telling me is that they couldn't call in human trafficking abuse to the hotline. I'm like, but you can't call it in? They were like, no, they don't accept it because, I mean, the abuse had to be a caregiver. And so often, it wasn't a caregiver who was, you know, suspected as the trafficker. And so the hotline was not accepting those calls. And I was like, Are you kidding me? We gotta fix this. And so soon as I put out the report about this, I got a call from the Department of Children and Families, and they asked me about it. And immediately they started taking human trafficking calls on the Florida hotline. It was just interesting that years later, I ended up being able to use that data for this study. And so from that point on it sort of began to allow those calls to come in to the hotline, and they have about I looked back over the past 10 years or so since they've been collecting it. And there are about 2,000 abuse calls in Florida related to human trafficking every year.



Jenn Tostlebe 28:28

That seems like a lot.



Jose Sanchez 28:30

Yeah. So when these calls come in, how many of them are like actual cases of human trafficking? Do you know how they actually kind of pan out?




Joan Reid 28:40

So I know what happens when someone calls in, right. So the first thing that happens is the hotline operator, right? Probably not what they're called. But you know, the person that's answering or responding to the hotline call, they ask a lot of questions and determine whether or not they're even going to take the call, right. So this 2000, like, includes those calls that have already been screened to some degree, right? Hey, you got enough information here? We're gonna take this call, right. And so the 2000 is already a reduced number, right? And so then at that point, if the calls received, it's investigated by Child Protective Services, right, so and that's, you know, it depends on where it is in Florida, you know, who responds, and then they investigate and they'll either determine two to three outcomes verified, which it means that there's substantial evidence that yes, this abuse occurred. Non-substantiated, I think is the next category and that means that the preponderance of the evidence didn't really, there was evidence but they're not really sure. And then Not Verified is the other category. And so for this paper I included both verified and non substantiated because non substantiated meant there was evidence but just not enough like to, you know, take it to court. Right. So, and with human trafficking, it's usually often not a caregiver. And that's much harder to like, get the cooperation of the youth and to figure out what's actually going on. And so, for this study, I use both verified and non substantiated cases.





Jenn Tostlebe 30:17

Yeah, I didn't realize obviously reading your paper that you were part of this push to include those reports. So that is really cool to kind of see (A) your own efforts, like put in action for all sorts of reasons, but then (B) also to be able to use it for research.

 Joan Reid 30:32  
It was perfect.

 Jose Sanchez 30:34  
Yeah. Kudos to you for getting that done.

 Jenn Tostlebe 30:36  
Yeah. All right. So let's start to move then into your results. When Jose was kind of giving the summary of your paper, you mentioned that you have this demographically matched comparison group, we're not going to get too statistically into that. But when comparing victims of juvenile human trafficking to this matched comparison group, what types of adverse childhood experiences and health risk behaviors were most common among the victims of juvenile human trafficking?


 Joan Reid 31:05  
You have to think too, this is all kids who are in juvenile justice involved youth. So you already have like a very victimized vulnerable population to start with, right. So there's a high levels of all kinds of maltreatment. So it's interesting to see that with the trafficked kids, even when they're in a very vulnerable sample, they still stand out, right is more vulnerable and more victimized or abused. So they had higher levels of emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional neglect, physical neglect, family violence, and foster care placement. So those were the adverse childhood experiences that were higher among the trafficked youth. And then interesting, I didn't really expect this, but there were some of the health risk behaviors they were actually lower in. And I think it makes a statement about who these kids are, they were less likely to have used a weapon and they were less likely to have a history of violence. But they were higher to report alcohol use, drug use, suicide ideation and attempts, to have a close connection to another juvenile who is in delinquency, and chronic running away, which was defined as more than five times they'd run away. So I just thought that was super interesting that they were less violent and less likely to use weapons, we kind of in psychology terms, we talked about the difference between kind of internal behaviors where, you know, you're handling stress through drug use, or, you know, you kind of coping with adverse childhood experiences in ways that are, you know, hurting you, right. And then there's kids that kind of act out who hurt others, and these kids tend to be ones that are hurting themselves.

 Jenn Tostlebe 32:48  
Is that kind of bringing it back to something you said toward the beginning of the episode? But

is that kind of bringing it back to something you said toward the beginning of the episode? But does that kind of paint this even this picture of a vulnerable child even more? Or how does that play into kind of that?

 Joan Reid 33:03

Yeah, so they portray what you're saying? Right? They are they are, and but when we see the profiles, you'll see that they all have these vulnerabilities, most of them have these vulnerabilities. But, you know, they don't all look the same.

 Jenn Tostlebe 33:15

Yeah.

 Jose Sanchez 33:17

So from there, you used a latent class analysis. And we're gonna try not to get too statistic with it for a general audience. But so you use this latent class analysis to identify a taxonomy of risk profiles based on ACEs and youth engagement in health risk behaviors, and you identified six different risk profiles. Can you give us a brief description of the six profiles?

 Joan Reid 33:44

Yes, I'll try to not be too like belabor it too much. So it's interesting this is so this is analytically, you know, identified. And as you said, we found six distinct vulnerability profiles. And also all of them had at least like 10% of the group, right? So none of them were like tiny, right? They all had enough members in each of those classes or groups to be significant and to matter, right, and to have some, you know, implications for policymakers. So the first one, and the largest one was about 25% of the group was that depiction that we've talked about earlier that we all think of when we think about human trafficking. So it was a highly vulnerable runaway adolescent with extensive history of child maltreatment, involvement in foster care. And they were engaging in health risk behaviors such as drug and alcohol use. So it is like exactly how we thought that largest group but it was still 25%. Right? So who are these other 75%? And what do they look like? Because if we're going to try to prevent this, we need to be able to look at who this other 75% is.

 Joan Reid 34:54

So the next kind of clump them together, so we don't go through each 6 separately, but if we add kind of two profiles to that they comprise another 25%. And they had similar risk profiles, but one was not involved in foster care. So there was a group that looked like this other, you know, profile, but no foster care, like zero. So that means these are community kids are still probably living with their family, who we're not going to find if we just look for foster care kids. And then there was one who was maltreated youth, but they had little to no alcohol or

substance use. So if we're targeting like drug use treatment centers to look for these high risk kids, were going to miss those kids. And then so that was three of the groups, and that's about 50%.

 Joan Reid 35:45

And then there was the remaining three risk profiles had very different endorsement patterns. So one experienced the highest rate of emotional abuse, but lower endorsement of all the other types of maltreatment. So they didn't have sexual abuse or physical abuse, but they had a high probability of drug use. So it was kind of a combination of emotional abuse at home and drug use as a health risk behavior. And it's interesting, because those two features have been linked in research, prior to my research, like that's not the first time those two risk factors have been linked to victimization. And then the other two profiles had low probability of child maltreatment, but that one had a high probability of drug use, but no other types of child maltreatment. And then the last profile, which it was still it was about, you know, over 10% of the group had nothing, nothing, nothing like they had hardly any maltreatment, no health-risk behaviors, and you're left going well, who is this? Right? Like, who is this? This last 10%? And so I kind of came up with two explanations. One is I missed a risk factor, like, Okay, we missed something like there is a risk factor out there that we're not looking at, that I'm not aware of. And then, are the other option is every youth is vulnerable, like and so, you know, traffickers are clever, and they're manipulative, I'll get that word out. And, you know, the more you study about adolescents, the more you realize they're really just vulnerable, because they're young, they're young, they don't have life experience. They're not psychologically mature, they can be easily manipulated. And so my takeaway message from that was like, hey, look, everybody could be a victim of human trafficking put, you know, in the wrong circumstances.

 Jose Sanchez 37:41

Yeah. Like the other youth with the risk factors, right? They just easier to be victimized, but put any kid at the wrong time at the right place. And like, you just need a moment. Right?

 Joan Reid 37:55

Right. You know, that's kind of the takeaway message from this paper was like, Hey, we better realize that prevention has to be broad. We can't just focus on just foster care homes, or just drug treatment facilities, or high risk kids who have been maltreated but aren't in foster care, we've got to focus prevention much broader than that and make sure that everyone is aware of, you know, what human trafficking is and how we can't really, you know, talk to a 12 year old about, like, here's human trafficking, but we need to talk to them in some way, like to help them understand like you could be exploited in this way. Yeah.

 Jenn Tostlebe 38:30

Alright, so you just started to get into this question. So you don't need to repeat yourself. But given what you're seeing with these results, that these victims are exhibiting a diverse profile of risk versus kind of this flashlight view that people typically think of. What kind of implications

of risk versus kind of this rashlight view that people typically think of, what kind of implications does this have for research, as well as for policy and practice?

J Joan Reid 38:55

Right? So that's a great question. So prevention, as I mentioned, really needs to be broader. And also, there's a lot of research right now on screening tools, and many, many of them are based on these risk factors that we've just discussed. And so that was one of the takeaway messages for me, for this paper, was that with other forms of victimization, we do not focus on risk factors of the victim, we focus on behavior of the perpetrator. And so for example, if you're being screened for domestic violence, they don't ask you about your risk factors they ask you if you've been hit, right. And so I think that--not that that's funny, at all--but I think we've got to flip our screening tools so that their questions about the situation and about the crime and about the perpetrator and not necessarily about the risk factors for the victims. So and there have been a few screening tools out there that are like that and have been shown to be validated and really successful at identifying victims. So I think that's kind of a big takeaway message is that some of these screening tools may not be, you know, we may be missing a lot of kids using those.

J Jose Sanchez 40:09

Right. Yeah, I think. So on that, little known fact, for my master's capstone project, I actually did it at a gang intervention agency, because that's what my research focuses on is gangs. But when I went to the agency, they're like, well, we don't really need help with any of the gang stuff. But we just got this grant for human trafficking. And we have like, nothing set up for it. Can you help us develop a tool for us to like, see if we are even like serving the right people? So basically, for my master's project, I put together this screening tool.

J Joan Reid 40:42

Wow, amazing.

J Jose Sanchez 40:44


I haven't looked at it in a very long time. So it's probably not great. But and unfortunately, when I moved to Colorado, communication between myself and the agency kind of died out. So I wasn't able to quite see it all the way through. But that's a little tidbit...

J Joan Reid 40:59

...about your research. That's amazing. And there are a lot of screening tools out there. And I think they have different purposes. But I think if we're just trying to kind of get a quick identification, like a few questions, right, I think we need to be, you know, kind of focusing on the situation and the perpetrator behavior. To do a quick screen, you know, not necessarily to



do treatment planning. For treatment planning, yes, you need all that information, but for just to kind of get a quick screen, and then maybe, you know, put them on kind of for further evaluation. I think we need some real four or five questions that are about offender behavior.

 Jose Sanchez 41:38

Right? Yeah, I think it's been a while. But I believe Vera had one that I looked at when I was trying to put one together, it seemed fine, but it wasn't quite what this agency needed. And so I think that kind of gets you where Yeah, some of them are useful, but they're not widely applicable.

 Joan Reid 41:55

Right, right.




Jenn Tostlebe 41:57

So let's move into our final section that we're just going to spend about five to ten minutes on, where we're talking about human trafficking and the internet. And so Joan, you kind of recently wrote this book chapter with Bryanna Fox on human trafficking and technology. For those who are interested, it's titled "Human trafficking and the darknet: Technology, innovation, and evolving criminal justice strategies." It's published in the book Science Informed Policing. And we'd like to just talk with you briefly about this subject. Clearly, over the last, I don't know, couple decades, technology has greatly expanded and changed. And this accessibility on top of the ability for individuals to be anonymous online, has caused a lot of changes when it comes to things like bullying, and possibly human trafficking. And so how have these changes impacted human trafficking for traffickers?

 Joan Reid 42:56

Yeah, so these are great questions. And I hope I can explain myself well. I don't consider myself, you know, specialized in cybercrime. But I have tried to learn as much as I can, because much of human trafficking, and how it happens depends on the web. And, you know, either, you know, the internet or smartphones or, you know, some kind of, you know, technology. And so I've tried to learn as much as I can about it. And so the combination of kind of globalization and technology accessibility has really facilitated the spread of human trafficking because there's all these different connections and opportunities for traffickers to connect to both consumers or clients and vulnerable people. And so that has really caused, you know, kind of an explosion, I would say, in human trafficking. And I can go on and talk about, probably the form of human trafficking that I'm most familiar with that occurs, you know, as I spoke earlier, is both child pornographic exploitation and, you know, child sexual exploitation through on the web or through prostitution or things like that. And I guess I don't want to say I hope this is helpful. But there was a moment it's in the chapter. But there was a the research is noted in the chapter that you mentioned, but sometimes those vulnerabilities in the dark web every once in a while, I can't really explain to you the technology, but every once in a while there's vulnerabilities in it. Things happen where researchers can look at things they normally can't.

And so there was a research that was done where that found that 83% of the hidden service request, were for online destinations delivering child pornographic content. So it kind of like there was a moment in time where they could kind of see where everyone was going. And 83% of the requests for services were related to child pornographic exploitation. So it kind of dwarfed all the other things that we think are going on on the Darknet. So, you know, illegal drugs or other things that are facilitated through the dark net, gambling or Bitcoin related sites or anonymous whistleblowing sites, those were really small compared to child pornographic sites. So I think that really gives you an idea of what's happening there.

 Jose Sanchez 45:15

Yeah, that's wild, wow. Okay. Look, so the expansion of technology. I'm guessing it's had some impact on law enforcement. And like this is already like we discuss a tough area to police. Could you tell us a little bit like if it had any impact on how the internet's had impacts on policing?

 Joan Reid 45:36

Sure. So you know, kind of, as we talked about earlier, there's kind of these phases in trafficking. And so police are trying to always kind of interdict during those phases. One is kind of the grooming and recruitment of vulnerable victims, the advertisement of illegal services provided to potential client base, and then the payment for the services, right. And unfortunately, with human trafficking, almost all of this now can be done on a smartphone, right. So it's like all this can happen, it makes it so much easier for trafficking to occur. It's all facilitated by digital technologies, through mobile phones and social networking. And so one of the forms of trafficking that I really didn't know about until I started looking into it was today that people can record and post images and even do live performances that involve sexual exploitation of children that can be accessed through websites, emails, instant messaging, peer to peer or Person to Person File Sharing, and social networking. And so it's really disturbing to think about but rich clients in wealthy countries, such as the US or Germany or other areas of Western Europe, can basically exploit children who are suffering in poverty in like the Philippines. And so that can all be done through technology now. And they even have a new form of victimization, they're calling it cannot remember the name, like instant gratification where a person can live ask for a certain type of sexual fetish to be displayed by two kids or one kid in another country. It's really disturbing how much technology facilitates this crime.



Jenn Tostlebe 47:17

And so that seems like it would make it incredibly difficult to police?

 Joan Reid 47:21

Yes. And so I mean, I think you're probably familiar, everyone's familiar with some of what's on the news. And we see it all the time, you know, where police go in and, you know, poses either another buyer or another client, or they pose as a child. And they kind of pull these perpetrators out, you know, and expose them through that. There's been a couple times when

they've commandeered the websites, the child pornographic websites, they've been able to commandeer them, and then everyone who used that site at that time they were able to go after. They have a presence in the dark web and they have a presence online trying to stop this from occurring. But it's really difficult.



Jenn Tostlebe 47:59

An interesting subject.



Jose Sanchez 48:02

Well, Joan, thank you so much. That's all the time we have today. And before we close out, is there anything else that you would like to add to our discussion on human trafficking?



Joan Reid 48:12

No, I'm just really grateful that you guys are putting this out there. And I hope that it's helpful to people to understand the problem and where research is and how it can move forward. Please, anyone feel free to contact me, you can just Google USF Trafficking in Persons Research Lab and my website will show up. And we have a new research lab at the University of South Florida that opened about a year ago. And, you know, I decided I looked across the different campuses of USF and saw different researchers all in isolation researching human trafficking. And I thought, hey, we can create some synergy and some support and work together and collaborate with grad students. And that's what's happened. Yeah, it's super exciting.



Jenn Tostlebe 48:53

Okay, congratulations. That's an endeavor to put together. That's awesome.



Jose Sanchez 48:57


Yep. And we will link all of your contact information. Nobody's gonna see this because this is a podcast, but I'm pointing down. What is supposed to be the description box. But again, thank you, Joan, for joining us. It was a great discussion. I know a lot on the heartbreaking side, but we kind of knew that that's kind of where it was gonna go from the outset. Is there anything you would like to plug anything we should be on the lookout for in the near future?



Joan Reid 49:25

Wow, that's a great question. I don't have anything to plug, except that, please, you know, check out the lab and the exciting things that are happening. We are getting some support from the Florida legislation that might begin to help us to create a unified human trafficking data center in my lab, because right now the data for human trafficking is very siloed. And so different departments, state departments and like Department of Children and Families,


Department of Juvenile Justice, they all have data, but no one's really sharing with each other. And so we're pushing for a data center where we could connect this, this human trafficking data that's already being collected and the works being done, but they're not syncing up. And so that's something that we're pushing for in Florida.

 Jose Sanchez 50:11

We discussed email. website. is there anywhere else people can find you and some of our guests on Twitter or other social media platforms,

 Joan Reid 50:19

I am on Twitter and LinkedIn, but I can't tell you what my handle is. I think it's @JAReid2016, something like that. So yeah.

 Jose Sanchez 50:30

Well, thank you again, it was a pleasure having you.



Jenn Tostlebe 50:32

It was great to learn about your research topic. And hopefully we can get in touch in person at some point and say hi!

 Joan Reid 50:39

That would be amazing. Thank you.



Jenn Tostlebe 50:41

Awesome. Thank you!



Jenn Tostlebe 50:42

Hey! Thanks for listening.

 Jose Sanchez 50:42

Don't forget to leave us a review on Apple podcasts or iTunes. Or let us know what you think of the episode by leaving us a comment on our website [thecriminologyacademy.com](http://thecriminologyacademy.com).



Jenn Tostlebe 50:42

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Jose Sanchez 50:42

Or email us at thecrimacademy@gmail.com.



Jenn Tostlebe 50:42

See you next time!



Jose Sanchez 50:42

See you next time!