

# About Cast

## Mission

To end human trafficking through education, advocacy and empowering survivors.

## Vision

To create a bridge between practice and policy, where survivors are working with practitioners to inform a survivor-centered policy agenda.

## What We Do

Cast is the United States' largest provider of comprehensive services to survivors of human trafficking and an advocate for groundbreaking policy and legislation.

## About Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is the exploitation of human beings through force, fraud or coercion for the purposes of commercial sex or forced labor. Anyone under 18 who performs a commercial sex act is considered a victim of human trafficking, regardless of whether force, fraud, or coercion was present.

Human trafficking can happen to anyone but it affects marginalized groups more than others. At Cast, 89% of the survivors we have ever served are Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC).



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“With Cast, I feel safe. Without them, I would have nothing.”

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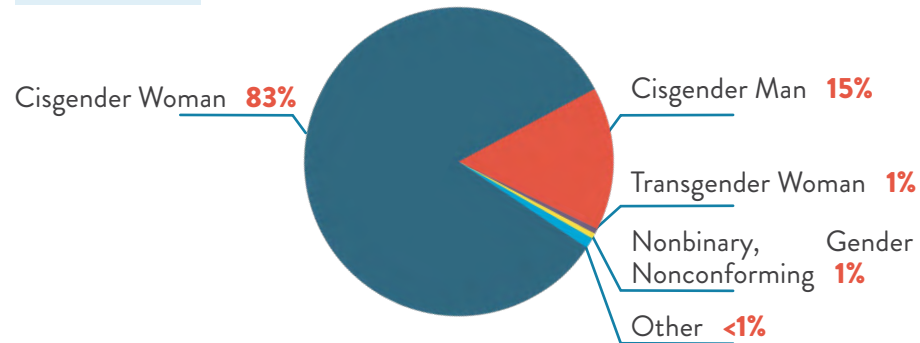
Jamila, 42, from Ethiopia, found herself lost on the streets of Los Angeles after escaping her trafficking situation, where she had been forced into domestic servitude. Cast was with Jamila every step to rebuild her life, including providing her with transitional shelter, connecting her to English classes and a job that supports her family, and reuniting her with her husband and son who she had not seen for six years.



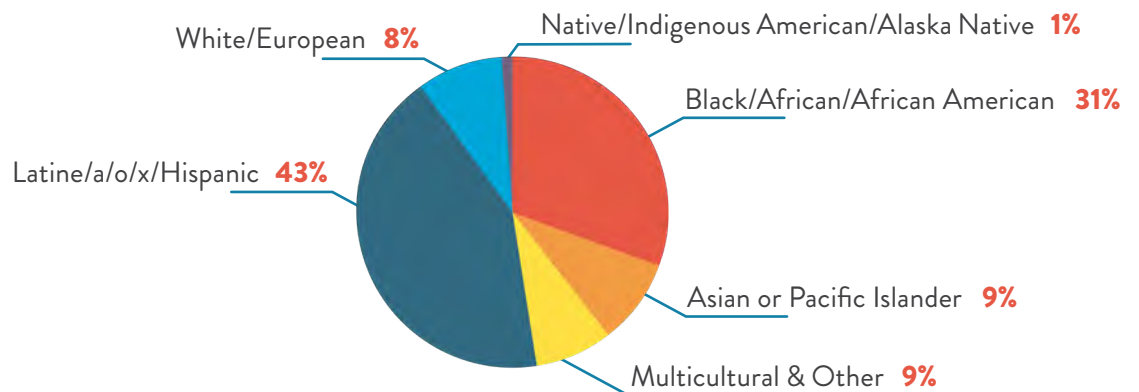
# Who we serve

Survivors who Cast served over the past year and who reported their information:

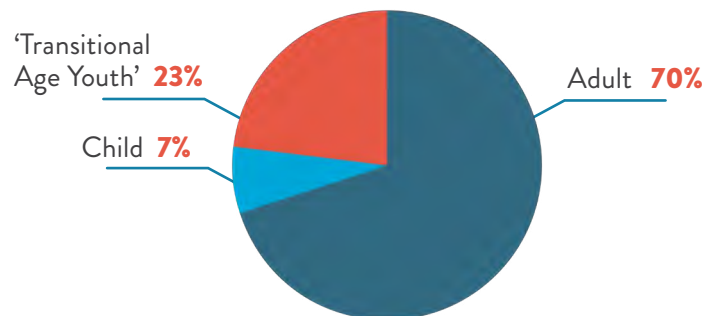
## Gender



## Race/Ethnicity

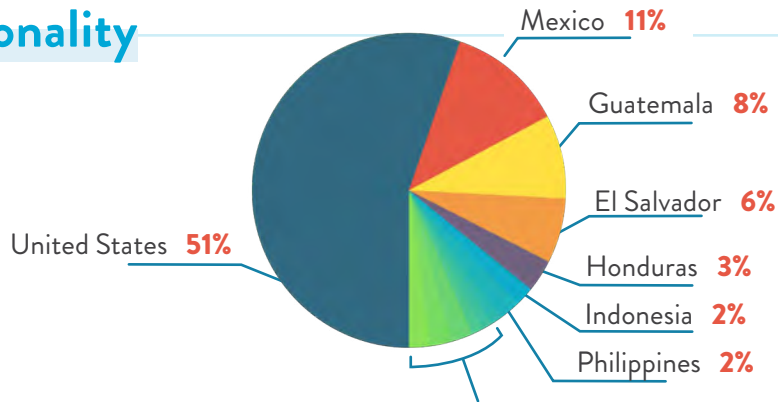


## Age



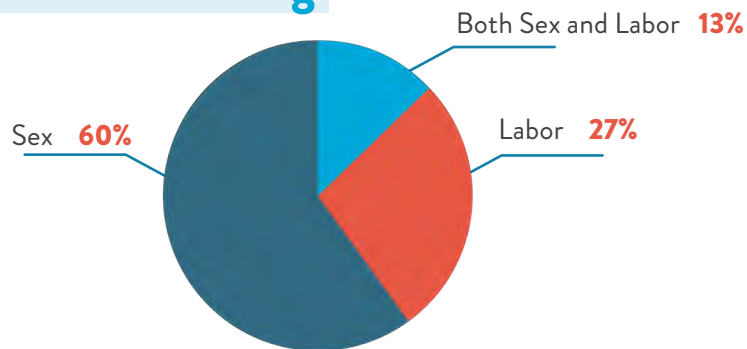


## Nationality

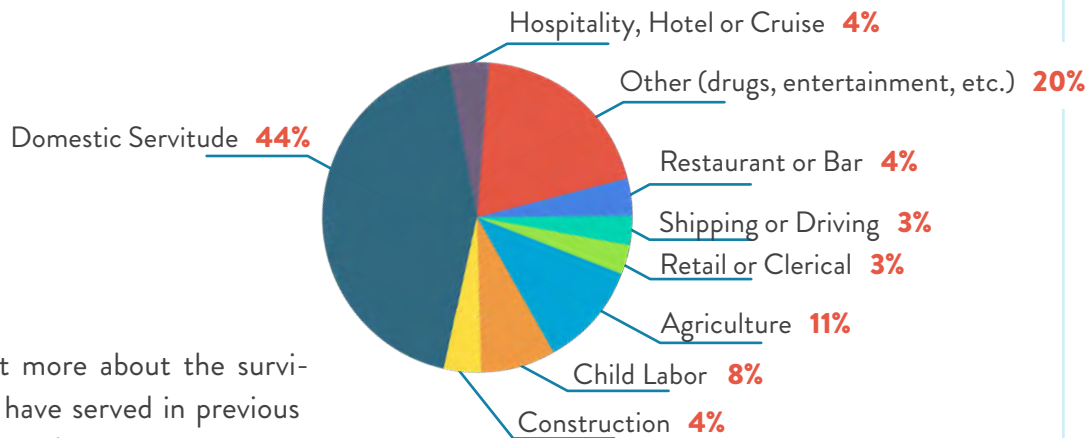


Nicaragua	1%	Bolivia	<1%	Italy	<1%	South Africa	<1%
Russia	1%	Brazil	<1%	Latvia	<1%	Sri Lanka	<1%
Taiwan	1%	Cambodia	<1%	Malaysia	<1%	Thailand	<1%
Belize	1%	Canada	<1%	Netherlands	<1%	Turks and Caicos Islands	<1%
Ethiopia	1%	Chile	<1%	Nigeria	<1%	Venezuela	<1%
India	1%	Colombia	<1%	Pakistan	<1%		
Ukraine	1%	Eritrea	<1%	Peru	<1%		

## Sex or Labor Trafficking



## Industries where clients were trafficked



Find out more about the survivors we have served in previous years at [castla.org](http://castla.org).



# Leading a human rights approach to human trafficking in the United States



**“Human trafficking reflects and amplifies existing kinds of oppression and exploitation. These root causes are not addressed in any way by arrest, which only creates and increases vulnerability.”**

Leigh LaChapelle, Associate Director of Survivor Advocacy, Cast

The way the United States has been dealing with human trafficking has ignored the root cause of it: the systemic oppression of women, BIPOC, immigrants, the LGBTQ+ community, people with disabilities and other marginalized groups; 89% of the survivors we have ever served are BIPOC. People who are systemically denied access to safe housing, healthcare, jobs and immigration are targeted by traffickers.

Despite being victims, survivors of human trafficking are being arrested for crimes they were forced to commit, which not only does not help, it worsens their future prospects and makes them vulnerable to being trafficked again. As a result, many survivors are too afraid to report to the police and their exploitation continues.

**Since unjust systems enable human trafficking, we cannot end it through those same systems. Human trafficking is a human rights issue because it happens when human rights are systemically denied.**

Honoring survivors' human rights is critical to preventing human trafficking. A human rights approach to human trafficking acknowledges that survivors often experience more than one kind of oppression, and that racism and white supremacy perpetuate human trafficking. Survivors not only deserve access to safe housing, healthcare, jobs, and immigration, but to live in a world in which we work together to prevent human trafficking by investing in the continued care of our communities.

Cast models this approach. Our partnership with healthcare providers is improving medical professionals' ability to identify survivors, since many go to hospitals after they escape, instead of going to the police. We are also training attorneys across the US to be race-conscious when they represent survivors. And we are leading calls to change laws that punish survivors for crimes they were forced to commit.

**A human rights response to human trafficking is the key to preventing it.**



## Education

Human trafficking is complex. It doesn't look the same every time it happens. Despite good intentions, human trafficking has been misrepresented in the news and media. As a result, **many people have a sensationalized idea of what human trafficking survivors look like**, including some who work with survivors. Others exploit misconceptions about human trafficking for their own gain. This has caused great harm to survivors and is why education is key to our mission.

We raise awareness of human trafficking by demonstrating that the oppression of marginalized people is why human trafficking exists and persists. We teach intersectional, anti-racist responses to human trafficking. Across our programs, we raise awareness of human trafficking in this way in group training and in one-on-one conversations with legislators, civic leaders, medical professionals, journalists, social workers, law enforcement, attorneys and the general public.



Our Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) program provides expert support and education on human trafficking to legal and social service professionals working with survivors across the United States. **Over the last year, we trained 4,337 people in 33 states**, increasing national capacity to serve survivors with services grounded in equity and justice. This year, the TTA team were fellows with the Racial Justice Institute at the Shriver Center on Poverty and Law.

In collaboration with the County of Los Angeles, Cast is providing training on human trafficking of children to those working with very vulnerable children including social workers and foster parents – and anyone can join.

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**“Great training! I have a much better explanation of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. I really just knew what I saw on TV and it was way different than it is portrayed in the media.”**

Training Participant

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Trainings range from an entry-level understanding of human trafficking to the complexities of ‘trauma-informed’ legal representation. **Over the last 12 months, we trained 9,754 people.**

## Advocacy



“The laws around human trafficking have not caught up. We fill in the gaps to effectively address human trafficking through awareness, education and advocacy, despite the law.”

Nagwa Ibrahim,  
Director of Legal Services, Cast

Using two decades of evidence from working with survivors, we press local, state, national and global leaders to pass more and better policies to protect survivors and prevent human trafficking. Many elected officials want to do this but they need to understand the issue better - so they contact Cast or we approach them.

In June, we urged the G7 to address forced labor, including actions to address the exploitation of refugees, displaced people, migrant and informal workers, women, children and other marginalized groups.

Since the Trafficking Victims Protection Act 2000, Cast has been an integral voice in advocating for equitable funding for survivors, the inclusion of labor trafficking in laws, and shifting policies from criminalization to prevention. In April 2022, Cast staff and survivors provided expert testimony during an Informational Hearing on Child Sex and Labor Trafficking in California.

For Human Trafficking Awareness Month in January, Cast produced a [PSA](#) with Nicole Scherzinger and the California Attorney General's office that was broadcast on television statewide and hosted a Twitter chat with his office, sharing information and resources.

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw survivors' needs increase and we knew that meeting those needs over the coming years would put a strain on service providers. We helped to advocate for a long-term solution, resulting in state funds for survivor services in California being tripled for the next three years. Our direct work with survivors enables us to be a movement builder.



Cast CEO Kay Buck; California State Assemblymember, Miguel Santiago; California Attorney General, Rob Bonta; Cast graduate Angela Guanzon; and actors and activists Mira Sorvino and Alyssa Milano in 2021. Cast and supporters successfully advocated for increased funds for agencies serving survivors of human trafficking. Photo: AP News/ Stefanie Dazio

# Empowering Survivors of Human Trafficking

The National Survivor Network (NSN) is a coalition of survivors of human trafficking from the US and abroad. Its mission is to develop, equip, and empower survivors engaged in advocacy, education, peer-to-peer mentorship, prevention, and policy work. The NSN also educates and provides technical assistance to other organizations on how to meaningfully engage with survivor leaders, in order to build an anti-trafficking movement led by survivors.

Over the past year, the NSN strengthened by redefining its values: focusing on a human rights-based approach to human trafficking to build a more equitable and inclusive anti-trafficking movement. This was a necessary step to create an emergent space for survivors to share their ideas - especially those from communities that are often silenced or misrepresented. It has been validating and empowering for survivors who have felt excluded from the movement. We believe this will lead to positive outcomes for all human trafficking survivors and will get us closer to our mission of ending human trafficking.

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“Our goal in carving out this values-defined space is to have a more inclusive movement overall.”

Chris Ash,  
Survivor Leadership Program Manager, Cast

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The NSN has been increasing the opportunities for survivors to build professional skills and get paid for their expertise on topics related to human trafficking. Skills-building sessions, training, financial assistance, and additional resources are available to all survivors of trafficking whether they are NSN members or not.

Cast is hiring more and more people with lived experience of human trafficking – from roles set aside specifically for survivors to all levels of leadership. This year we welcomed survivors of human trafficking in our legal and training teams for the first time.

## What NSN members are saying

“I believe it’s very important to make sure that we’re all on the same page about human rights and dismantling all systems of oppression. I believe that organizations that adopt and honor a values-based system not only help avoid harm but actually help heal it for members who have experienced it.”

“The NSN is what I wish I had had around me when I was younger and struggling to find safe spaces anywhere at all.”



Find out more about  
the National Survivor  
Network