Dr. Abraham Maslow’s *Theory of Human Motivation and Hierarchy of Needs* has been widely applied for decades in the social sciences to explain human behavior.

His theory is that humans have a hierarchy of needs and they cannot address the next level of “need” until they achieve the prior level.

The model is very helpful in thinking about how vulnerable people are lured into, and remain in, dangerous and victimizing situations.

*To be successful, a long-term strategy to combat human trafficking must address this reality.*
Many sex traffickers lure victims by providing basic survival needs. They systematically provide distorted versions of higher needs to manipulate victims. Using threats, force and coercion, traffickers exploit the fact that, for many victims, “the life” may be their first experience of ‘family’ and belonging.

Dr. Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

**Physiological needs**
“Survival Needs” - Food, water, shelter, clothing

**Safety and Security**
Freedom from fear, financial security, employment, social stability, security of family, health, property

**Love and Belonging**
Attachment, friendship, family, to love and be loved, intimacy

**Self-Esteem**
Respect from others, confidence, achievement, individuality

**Self-Actualization**
Pursue life goals, inner talent, creativity, fulfillment