

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/blog/both-victims-and-research-aided-by-vera-partner-sanctuary-for-families>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

The Vera Institutes high quality research often depends upon collaborations with leading service organizations who work closely with the justice system to rescue and protect victims of abuse. [Sanctuary for Families](#), a partner organization in the [Vera Institutes research on human trafficking](#), is exemplary in this regard. On November 20, [Attorney General Eric Schneidermans office](#), in partnership with the NYPD, conducted a bust of a major prostitution and money laundering ring based in the New York area. During the bust, they identified two victims of sex trafficking, and prosecutors reached out to Sanctuary for Families for help. Attorneys at Sanctuary worked through the night to ensure that the trafficking victims were safe. But, in fact, organizations like Sanctuary for Families work day and night throughout the year to obtain justice for human trafficking victims.

A hidden but widespread crime, human trafficking is best defined as modern day slavery, and involves sexual or labor exploitation and abuse through force, fraud or coercion of adults, as well as commercial sexual and labor exploitation of children. The problem is that most trafficking victims are not discovered, and the traffickers are never stopped. Sanctuary for Families and several other victim serving organizations have collaborated with Vera in designing and implementing a human trafficking victim identification screening tool, which is currently being tested in the field. Vera researchers greatly value the frontline expertise of our partners, because it helps ensure that our research is grounded, meaningful and useful.

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