

Domestic Servitude



What is Domestic Servitude?

Domestic Servitude involves children, men and women being forced to work in private households performing tasks such as childcare and housekeeping for little or no pay and in abusive conditions.

Victims of Domestic Servitude can be entirely dependent on their traffickers and often speak limited to no English. Victims are often completely isolated from the outside world, which is exacerbated by restriction of their movement. Where 'freedom' is allowed, it is heavily curbed by extreme psychological control. Many victims have no private space often sleeping on mattresses on the floor in an open part of the house.

Unlike many other forms of trafficking, Domestic Servitude, particularly that of adult migrants does NOT usually involve organised criminal networks. There is evidence indicating that perpetrators may contradict the usual 'criminal' profile, holding positions of influence and wealth e.g. Dr's, lawyers, bankers, diplomats. Many victims of Domestic Servitude are children who are brought to the UK with promises of education and then grossly deceived once here. However there are also many adult victims of domestic servitude, many of whom are **migrant domestic workers**. These are men and women who enter the UK legally, willingly accompanying their employer to the UK but once here find that they are subject to extreme levels of abuse, control and exploitation.

Statistics

- *In 2014 there were 234 adults referred to the National Referral Mechanism as victims of Domestic Servitude, 200 of which were women.*
- *71 children were identified by the NRM as being victims of Domestic Servitude in 2014.*

What are the signs?

- Foreign national adult/child lives with family (possibly as domestic worker/ nanny).
- Rarely allowed out of house, unless accompanied.
- Subjected to psychological/physical/ sexual abuse.
- No private space/poor sleeping arrangements.
- Poor diet/leftovers.
- If a child, poor attendance at school/no time to play.
- Person not interacting much with family.

Useful Resources

- 'Still enslaved: The migrant domestic workers who are trapped by the immigration rules.' April 2014. Kalayaan
- 'Hidden Away Abuses against Migrant Domestic Workers in the UK'. Human Rights Watch

Who to contact?

Kalayaan is the main organisation working with domestic workers in the UK. www.kalayaan.org.uk

Call **101** to contact your local police or 999 in an emergency

Call the Salvation Army's 24-hour confidential Referral Helpline on **0300 3038151**