**Human Trafficking in the Twin Cities**

**Super Bowl-related:**

The Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension revealed the results of its undercover Human Trafficking operation that ran between Jan. 26 and Feb. 3.

* 36 people were booked on probable cause felony solicitation of a minor.
* 7 people were booked on probable cause sex trafficking and promotion of prostitution.
* 14 women were rescued from trafficking situations.

"Now that the Super Bowl is past, these arrests should serve as a stark reminder that what drives the exploitation and trafficking of vulnerable people is the demand. Notably, as shown by these arrests, the demand is a local problem and involves men from our own community who want to exploit very young girls and boys," Ramsey County Attorney John Choi added.

 Preparations for Super Bowl LII included addressing any accompanying uptick in prostitution or sex trafficking. While people elsewhere have made claims that the Super Bowl is the biggest time for sex trafficking, a [University of Minnesota report](https://uroc.umn.edu/sites/uroc.umn.edu/files/SuperBowl%20Research%20Brief%20PUBLIC%20document%206-3-17.pdf" \t "_blank) noted “the Super Bowl does not appear to have the largest impact.” Different types of events — such as trade shows, holiday weekends and other sporting events — also generate an increase. “This problem is in our community 365 days a year, every hour, every minute of every day,” said Ramsey County Attorney John Choi.

**Jenny, a case history:**

There was a time when Jenny went to the biggest sporting events — she traveled to Las Vegas or Atlantic City for Mike Tyson boxing matches, and to Minneapolis when the city hosted the World Series. The trips were anything but fun or glamorous. Gaines was under the control of violent pimps — beginning when she was 14 years old in Minneapolis. She said they would tell her to go from place to place, hoping to capitalize on economies of scale to turn more tricks in less time. The traffickers also had monetary quotas, and Jenny knew she could face beatings if she didn’t meet them. It took years for Jenny, now 48, to get out of that life. and now she works to help women who are still in it. She is a program specialist for Breaking Free in St. Paul, a survivor-led nonprofit that works with women who have been involved in prostitution or victims of sex trafficking.