

Human Trafficking School Resources



Use this checklist to increase your knowledge on human trafficking in our school systems and identify potential red flags!

SCHOOLS ROLE TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- Increase staff awareness through education on how to recognize and report.
- Increase student and parent awareness on the danger's traffickers pose and realities of trafficking.
- Develop a clearly defined district or state wide protocol on how to recognize and report and enact a policy in the event of a voluntary disclosure.
- Victims rarely self-disclose or identify themselves as a victim, so knowing the potential red flags is paramount for educators, parents, and support staff.
- Know the areas traffickers are grooming and recruiting vulnerable youth, and technology's role in trafficking through social media and gaming apps.
- Exploitation threaten the safety of the campus and the prosperous future of our children (US Department of Education, Trafficking in American Schools, 2015).

STATISTICS AND RED FLAGS OF SEX TRAFFICKING

- The average age for a child to be exploited for sex is 9-12 for girls, and 11-13 for boys, but children as young as age four and six have been trafficked—Mean age 13 (varies with source). The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) 2017 data reported that of the 25,000 runaways reported, 1 out of 7 were likely victims of child sex trafficking and 88% were in the care of social services when they went missing (child welfare).
- Potential Indicators of Human Trafficking:**
 - Changes in behavior or school participation; i.e., spike in truancy, performance severely under grade level?
 - Involved in a relationship with an older man, receives frequent, expensive gifts, and gets picked up by the trafficker/controller?
 - Has multiple cell phones? Large amounts of cash?
 - Online profile is sexually provocative or explicit on social media or internet sites.
 - Sexually transmitted infection in a minor? Multiple sex partners? Frequent urinary tract infection?
 - Tattoos that imply ownership, branding, or are sexually explicit; crown, dollar sign, initials?
 - Sudden change in behavior; startles easily, profound fear, hypervigilant, signs of substance use?
 - Becomes withdrawn, isolated, depressed, suicidal, rebellious?
- Anyone under age 18, involved in a commercial sex act is a victim of child sexual assault/rape and fall under mandatory reporting guidelines.
- History of running away from home or being homeless, "couch surfing." Be alert for sleep deprivation or signs of fatigue, weight loss.

TECHNOLOGY AND TRAFFICKING

- In January of 2018, Thorn in collaboration with Dr. Bouche' published the results of a survey that detailed how technology plays a role in domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST). Survivor insights further highlighted the exploitation of victims through various social media platforms.
- 55% of DMST survivors who entered the life in 2015 or later met their trafficker for the first time using a mobile app, website (online), or by text message.
- 63% of traffickers used online platform to groom potentially vulnerable victims (Thorn, 2018).
- Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) is made more accessible by technology, e.g., social media, the internet, and online gaming apps. A "Virtual Street Corner."
- In 2018, the Pew Research Center found that 95% of teens have access to a smartphone and 45% are online all the time (pewinternet.org, 2018).
- PEW Found That on average, a child gets his or her first smartphone at 10.3 years old. by age 12, a full 50% of children have social media accounts (primarily Facebook and Instagram).
- A trafficker can groom and exploit multiple victims at once on these platforms.
- Educate students to never share their location or post where they are going next, only where they already were for the day/night.
- Do not accept friend requests from someone you do not know.
- Do not share sexually provocative photos online or via text message.
- Do not agree to meet anyone that you met online in a private meeting.
- Know what games your students are playing and educate them on the risks of online gaming.

References:

- Anderson, M., & Jiang, J. (2018). Teens, social media & Technology 2018. [online]. Available: <https://www.pewinternet.org/2018/05/31/teens-social-media-technology-2018/>.
- Bouche, V., & Thorn. (2018). Survivor Insights: The role of technology in domestic minor sex trafficking. [online]. Available: https://www.Thorn.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/thorn_survivor_insights_061118.pdf.
- Human Trafficking in America's Schools (2015). <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/HumanTraffickinginAmericasSchools.pdf>

Parental Controls and Social Network Safety:

- With Content & Privacy Restrictions in Screen Time, you can block or limit specific apps and features on your child's device and restrict the settings on your iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch for explicit content, purchases and downloads, and privacy (Apple, Inc).
- <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201304#set-restrictions>
- <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT204396>
- <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT203033>
- <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201087>
- <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT208982>
- <https://www.idownloadblog.com/2014/03/09/how-to-view-iphone-photos-metadata/>
- <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/hub/4099151/windows-security-help>
- <https://www.ncpc.org/resources/cyberbullying/>
- <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0012-kids-and-socializing-online>