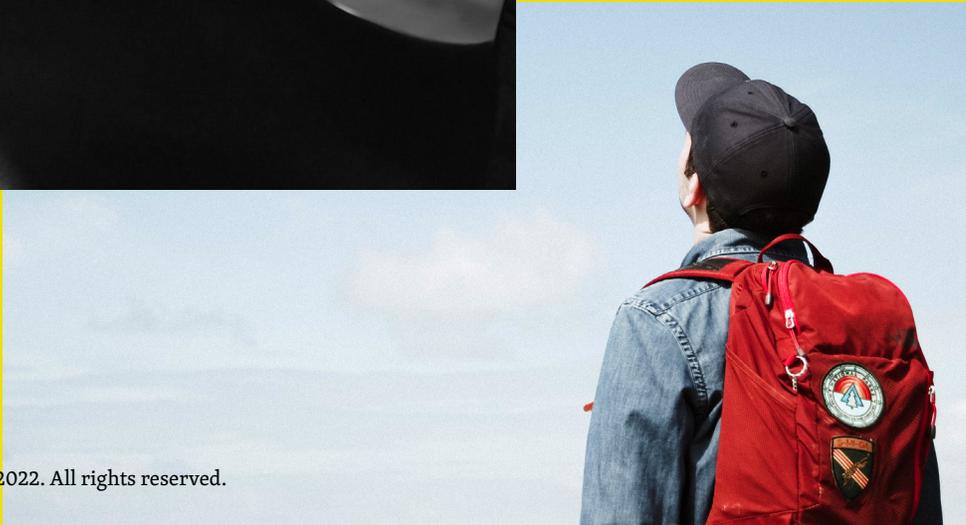




# Educator Guide





## WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of people through force, fraud or deception, with the aim of exploiting their bodies or their labor for profit. It is modern-day slavery and affects millions of men, women, and children around the world; it also happens in our community.

According to U.S. law, any minor under the age of 18 who is induced to perform a commercial sex act is a victim of human trafficking, regardless of whether there is force, fraud, or coercion.<sup>1</sup>

- Roughly 1 in 4 human trafficking victims are children.<sup>2</sup>
- All 50 states, including the District of Columbia, reported cases of human trafficking in 2018.<sup>3</sup>
- 1 in 6 runaway children reported to NCMEC in 2019 were likely sex trafficking victims.<sup>4</sup>

## WHAT IS ONLINE CHILD EXPLOITATION?

**Online child exploitation** is the persuasion of a minor (someone under the age of 18) to create child sexual abuse media (CSAM); such as images or videos of themselves and participating in sexual live-stream videos, whether they are recorded or not. Often offenders will manipulate the child to engage in such conduct by first building an emotional connection and relationship with a child, to gain trust, with the ultimate goal of sexual exploitation. Additional forms of online child exploitation include:

- **Sextortion:** Blackmailing someone to get them to create or share sexual images or videos of themselves.
- **Enticement:** Persuading a child to engage in a sexual act.
- **Possession, distribution, and receipt of child sexual abuse materials:** Possessing, receiving, or distributing CSAM images, whether obtained by manipulation or not, result in harm to the child featured in the CSAM materials.

## WHO IS AT RISK?

Victims can be any age, race, gender, or nationality. Certain children populations have demonstrated higher risk factors of being trafficked or exploited.

<sup>1</sup>Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA), Pub. L. No. 106-386, 103(8)(A), 114 Stat. 1470 (2000), 22 U.S.C.A. 7102(8)(A).

<sup>2</sup>International Labor Organization, *Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour* (Geneva, 2017) [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms\\_575479.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_575479.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>Polaris, *Human Trafficking Hotline* (U.S., 2019), <http://humantraffickinghotline.org/states>

<sup>4</sup>National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, *Key Facts* (U.S., 2020), <https://www.missingkids.org/footer/media/keyfacts>

## At-Risk Youth Factors:

- Out-of-home placement (homeless or in foster care)
- Children from unstable and unsafe homes or without parent figures
- Migrant youth or foreign-born
- Youth who identify in the population of LGBTQ+
- Children involved with the child welfare system
- Children living in poverty
- Minority children
- Students with behavioral health concerns
- Abused children
- Children with learning or physical disabilities or delays
- Students with lack of social support
- Children who tend to be isolated or have a low self-esteem
- Youth who experience substance or alcohol abuse
- Children with unmet needs or low income support
- Youth with lack of opportunity or feel hopeless about achieving their dreams
- Youth already engaging in high-risk behaviors



## HOW IS EDUCATION KEY TO ABOLISHING HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

The formalized school system provides the greatest opportunity to reach and influence the most students at one time. It provides an infrastructure that allows students to learn important information to protect themselves while also empowering them to advocate and respond. It's a place filled with safe adults who can identify at-risk youth and provide them assistance and support.

Educational stakeholders can lead the way as influencers rather than bystanders. They include but are not limited to: superintendents, school boards, administrators, guidance counselors, educators, school personnel (e.g., resource officers, school nurses, bus drivers, cafeteria workers), parents, and students.





## METHODS AND INDICATORS

**Recognize methods traffickers use and red-flags as indicators that students might be victims of trafficking or at a higher risk of becoming a trafficking victim.**

- Traffickers are known to recruit and lure children. They can be strangers, family members, acquaintances, employers, pimps, and can even be teenagers and peers.
- Traffickers use a plethora of recruitment tactics on vulnerable youth, many of whom are at-risk students. They build trust with targeted victims and lure them through social media, texting, chat lines, clubs, in their neighborhoods, at bus stops, shopping areas, during school-sponsored events, and even through recruiters.
- Traffickers can use students as recruiters, ensnaring them into trafficking through gangs and luring them to form relationships and friendships with their peers in order to bring other students to the traffickers.
- Each victim has different experiences and can endure multiple methods of victimization.

<i>Force — Power</i>	<i>Fraud — Deception</i>	<i>Coercion — Manipulation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threats</li> <li>• Sexual abuse</li> <li>• Physical abuse</li> <li>• Substance abuse</li> <li>• Mental abuse</li> <li>• Forced labor</li> <li>• Control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploiting youthful curiosity about sex</li> <li>• Grooming for trust</li> <li>• Seduction; wooing into romantic relationships</li> <li>• False promises of a better life financially, protection, and emotional security</li> <li>• Tricked job opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shame and fear</li> <li>• Threats and pressure</li> <li>• Blackmail</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Sextortion</li> <li>• Debt bondage</li> <li>• Bonded labor</li> <li>• Involuntary servitude</li> </ul>

While not all behaviors lead to victims of trafficking, there are some strong signs that can begin to identify students who may demonstrate characteristics related to trafficking. Educators can look for physical, behavioral/emotional, or environmental/situational indicators in students

*Physical*

- Displays signs of exhaustion or lack of sleep at school
- Shows signs of being denied food or dental and medical care
- Evidence of poor personal hygiene or sudden change in attention to personal hygiene
- Has tattoos that appear to be used for branding (i.e., gang signs, a name, slogans)
- Exposes burns or scarring, indicating abuse
- Wears inappropriate attire
- Signs of substance abuse

*Behavioral/  
Emotional*

- Displays significant behavior changes in personality (e.g., anger, depression, fear)
- Appears secretive about who they are talking to or meeting
- Exhibits being withdrawn or detached
- Demonstrates helplessness or social isolation from family and friends
- Afraid to talk to school personnel due to being closely monitored and controlled by traffickers
- Avoids eye contact or resists being touched
- Engages in promiscuous behavior

*Environmental/  
Situational*

- Exhibits a sudden performance change in academics
- Has frequent acts of truancy (i.e., unexcused absences, inability to regularly attend school/classes, disappears often, missed school days)
- Displays inconsistencies, coached or rehearsed responses to questions about after school activities
- References frequent travel or long work hours
- Has an older or controlling “boyfriend/girlfriend/friend”
- Displays sudden onset of gifts (i.e., clothes, phones, jewelry, makeup)
- Records multiple school transfers





## ***Recommendations for Human Trafficking Prevention Education***

### **01 CURRICULA & RESOURCES**

***Implement effective human trafficking curriculum and resources.***

Sample guidelines of effective human trafficking prevention education resources:

- Ensure content is evidence-based or evidence-informed
- Choose content that is age appropriate and developmentally appropriate for your students
- Check that content is aligned to grade-level standards
- Verify that content is victim/survivor centered and trauma informed
- Utilize pre/post assessments and other methods to collect data and measure progress
- Look for content that is diverse and culturally relevant
- Confirm reporting procedures before utilizing content with students

### **02 PROACTIVE APPROACH**

***Develop policies and protocols for responding to a disclosure from a suspected victim.***

Schools can take a proactive approach to create strong policies and protocols similar to procedures already used in mandatory reporting of sexual assault and child abuse.

Sample actions school staff can take when creating policy and protocols:

- Plan and train all school staff on human trafficking to include the following: risk factors for vulnerable children, red-flags and indicators, the victim-centered approach, how to interact with potential victims, and reporting protocol for disclosure
- Model healthy relationships among staff
- Create healthy environments to support students who may be vulnerable or are victims
- Make the appropriate referral to school personnel and community contacts
- Recognize and report suspected trafficking to the appropriate authorities
- Partner with local law enforcement agencies to protect the routes that students use to travel to and from schools

Educators should avoid investigating human trafficking cases. School personnel do not have to prove trafficking exists and they should not pressure the child to divulge information regarding any injury or other circumstances surrounding the abuse and/or neglect. They are, however, mandated reporters under the law. Teachers should report suspected signs and allow authorities to follow up from reporting.

Sample protocol steps if school staff suspects trafficking:

- Evaluate the student circumstances against the red flags behaviors
- Exercise caution to minimize risk of harm to the potential victim
- Use a victim-centered approach
- Record and document as much information as possible for reporting
- Refer to appropriate school personnel and community contacts
- Investigate possible campus impacts and safety issues

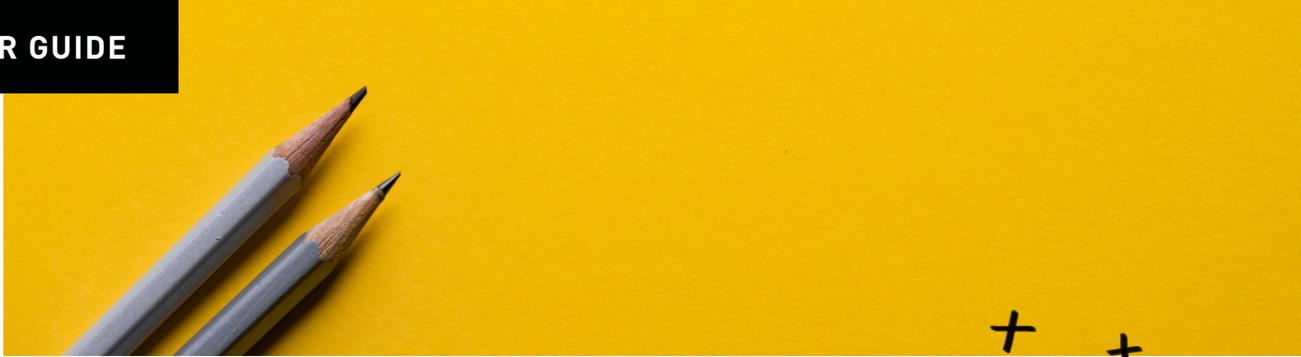
**03 PARTNERSHIPS**

*Increase community, parent, and student awareness.*

- Partner with local law enforcement experts and advocacy agencies to provide a parent awareness program on the dangers and warning signs of trafficking
- Create an awareness campaign in schools and the community
- Provide programs and roles for parents and guardians to make them part of their children’s safety and security, both at school and while going to and from school

<i>School-Based Partners</i>	<i>Community-Based Partners</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrators</li> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• Resource-officers</li> <li>• Psychologists</li> <li>• Guidance counselors</li> <li>• Nurses</li> <li>• Bus drivers</li> <li>• Cafeteria workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law enforcement</li> <li>• Child welfare services</li> <li>• Community/civic groups</li> <li>• Advocacy centers</li> <li>• Human trafficking coalitions</li> <li>• Faith-based institutions</li> <li>• Business owners</li> <li>• Transportation systems</li> </ul>

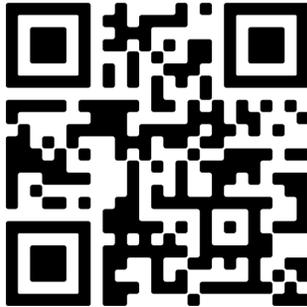




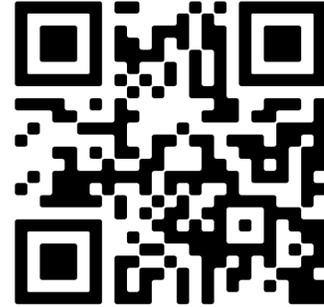
## Additional Resources



**CAN YOU SEE ME?**  
Videos & Posters



**PARENT GUIDES**  
For Kids & Teens



**DIGITAL SAFETY GUIDE**  
For Teens

## IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

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**National Center for Missing  
and Exploited Children (NCMEC)**  
1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678)  
CyberTipline: [MissingKids.org](https://www.missingkids.org)

**National Human Trafficking  
Hotline (Polaris Project)**  
1-888-373-7888  
Text: BeFree (233733)

For additional resources on preventing child trafficking, visit:  
**[A21.ORG/EDUCATION-RESOURCES](https://www.a21.org/education-resources)**

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