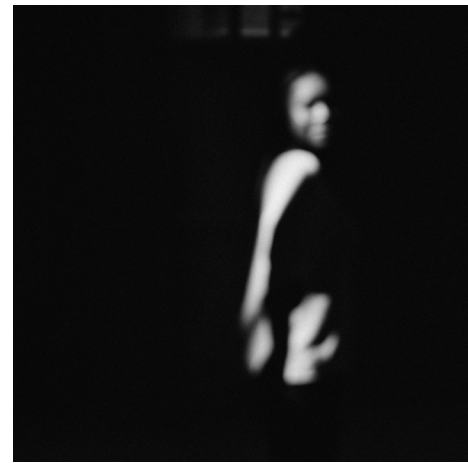


Parent Guide For Kids





WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?



DEFINITION

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.¹

INDICATORS

Children can be lured into trafficking by a relative or a trusted family friend. They can be recruited through social media platforms, video games, at school, parks and other places where kids may spend time.

It is important to know the signs to look for in order to protect your child from being trafficked or groomed for trafficking.

- Displays sudden changes in their academics, behavior, or appearance
- Displays sudden change in behavior around trusted adults
- Acquires new and oftentimes older friends
- Owns new items that they would not be able to afford or you did not buy for them (i.e., cell phones, new clothes, beauty products, toys, or digital items such as avatar skins for online gaming)
- Stops engaging in activities they previously enjoyed
- Constantly sleeps during class or has unexplained absences from school
- Chats frequently online, over social media platforms, or within video games (they can often try to hide this behavior)

**This list of red flags is not all-encompassing, nor is it meant to be used to profile potential victims. If observed, consider asking more questions or making a report to the human trafficking hotline in your country. We recommend you take a look at further resources and references in this guide.*

¹Victims 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)

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

Child trafficking and online exploitation
Call: 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678)
CyberTipline: MissingKids.org

National Human Trafficking Hotline

All forms of trafficking, all ages
Call: 1-888-373-7888
Text: BeFree (233733)

Talking With Your Child

HOW DO YOU TALK WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Open communication and creating an environment that builds trust is key to safeguarding your child. Assure your child that you care for them and only want the best for them. Make it clear to them that they will never be in trouble for disclosing something serious – sometimes, adults may want to take advantage of children, and it is never the child’s fault.

- ▶ **SAY:** “I love you, and I want to make sure you are safe and you feel protected. I’m concerned because you could meet someone at the park/online/in school, and they might offer you something that you are interested in; they may act as if they care for you and promise to love you, buy you things, or be a listening ear. Then, they may ask you to do something that makes you feel uncomfortable. You may feel scared to tell me once these things have happened, but you don’t need to be afraid. I want to help you avoid these situations and work through things together.”

WHAT ARE SOME TOPICS YOU CAN BRING UP WITH YOUR CHILD?

PERSONAL VALUE

- **Bodily Care:** Teach your child how to value and take care of their body, treating it with respect (e.g., proper hygiene, nutrition, rest).
- **Bodily Respect:** Explain how their body is never meant to be used to get something or to pay for something (e.g., showing body parts for candy or a toy).

PERSONAL BOUNDARIES AND SPACE

- **Safe Boundaries:** Discuss how they have a right to their personal boundaries and how they can put up these personal boundaries with others to feel comfortable. Do not force your child to touch, hug, be picked up by, or sit on the lap of an individual who they do not want to have physical contact with. Even if it’s a trusted family member or friend, it’s important that your child understands that their safe boundaries will be respected. It also empowers them to listen to their instincts and set the boundaries that will keep them safe.
- **Safe Space:** Explain that they should tell a trusted adult if another child or adult makes them feel uncomfortable or invades their personal space or environment (e.g. entering into their bathroom, bedroom). Remind them that even family members and close friends should respect their personal boundaries. Give your child language to say “no” if someone makes them feel uncomfortable (e.g., “I don’t like the way I feel when you touch me,” “I don’t feel like I have a choice.”)

PEER PRESSURE

- Discuss how they might sometimes feel the need to do what their friends are doing to be accepted or to have a place in the group. However, decisions that are influenced by other people can be dangerous and may lead to situations that could make them feel uncomfortable.



Preventative Safety Measures

Child Rights: Empower your child with the ability to say no when they feel uncomfortable. “You have the right to say no to anyone if you feel unsafe.”

Safe and Unsafe Secrets: Discuss how unhealthy, harmful relationships and child trafficking rely mainly on secrecy. Explain the importance of how to recognize the difference between safe and unsafe secrets.

- **Safe Secrets:** information that is meant to be private or kept unknown by others but will eventually be revealed (e.g., surprise)
- **Unsafe Secrets:** information that could hurt someone or break the law, makes someone feel scared, uneasy, and is not meant to be private or unknown by others (told not to tell)

Safe and Unsafe Touch: Share the difference between safe and unsafe touch. Avoid using the terms “good vs. bad” touch because there are times where “bad” touch may feel “good” and the verbiage can be confusing.

- **Safe Touch:** demonstrates normal affection like shaking hands for greeting, a pat on the back, or a friendly hug. Remind them they only have to touch (hug, high five, etc.) people they feel comfortable with.
- **Unsafe Touch:** unwanted or uncomfortable affection like touching private parts (areas covered by a bathing suit or underwear). It can also be someone asking you to touch them in places covered by their bathing suit or underwear, or in other places that make you feel uncomfortable.

Safe and Unsafe Online Conversations: Discuss how people can try to deceive them online and/or through social media. (Note: These examples can apply to other types of conversations as well.)



Online Safety Tips to Discuss

Identity and Location

- Keep from posting personal information (e.g., address, phone number, age, the school you attend)
- Avoid posting any identifiable information (i.e., pictures of you in front of your home, school, or places that you frequent)

Communication

- Only accept known and trusted friends and family
- Block someone if they make you feel uncomfortable or have repeated uninvited communication
- Keep from posting emotional posts or those where you're requesting, hoping, or wanting specific items or services
- **Safe Online Communication:** includes social media posts, texts, or emails to known and trusted people. This includes sending appropriate photos to family and friends and only having conversations that you are okay for others to see.
- **Unsafe Online Communication:** are social media posts, texts, or emails to unknown and untrusted people. This includes sharing passwords or personal information with anyone online, receiving photos that include unwanted or uninvited content, and someone asking you to show them your private parts (e.g., via webcam, text) or sending you inappropriate photos.

Safety Plan: Create a Safety Plan and talk to your children about a safe route and ways to avoid danger, including places to go if they feel uncomfortable, key people, and safety words to ask for help. Additionally, have your child share their location with you on their cell. One way to practice safety plans with children is based on “what if?” questions or scenarios.

Group Safety: Have your child stay in a group as much as possible and remind them to never accept a ride from a stranger or anyone they do not trust or who makes them feel uncomfortable.





Stopping
~~trafficking~~
before it
starts.

WHAT PROTECTIVE MEASURES CAN I TAKE TO SAFEGUARD MY CHILD FROM HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

- Monitor your child's activities online and offline
- Know who your child knows, what they watch, and who they communicate with
- Set healthy boundaries and involve your child in the process
- Implement online safeguarding measures (e.g., charging your child's electronics outside of the bedroom overnight, installing parental control software on devices, monitoring your child's social media accounts, and knowing their passwords)
- Foster a healthy and safe relationship with your child so they will communicate and come to you about uncomfortable or unsafe situations
- Read a book together as it can help children discuss topics by relating to a story or story character
- Add the trafficking hotline numbers into your phone's contact list (and into your child's phone)
- Tell your child that if they are in an emergency situation, or an unsafe situation, they need to call 911

For additional resources on preventing child trafficking, visit:

A21.ORG/EDUCATION-RESOURCES

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