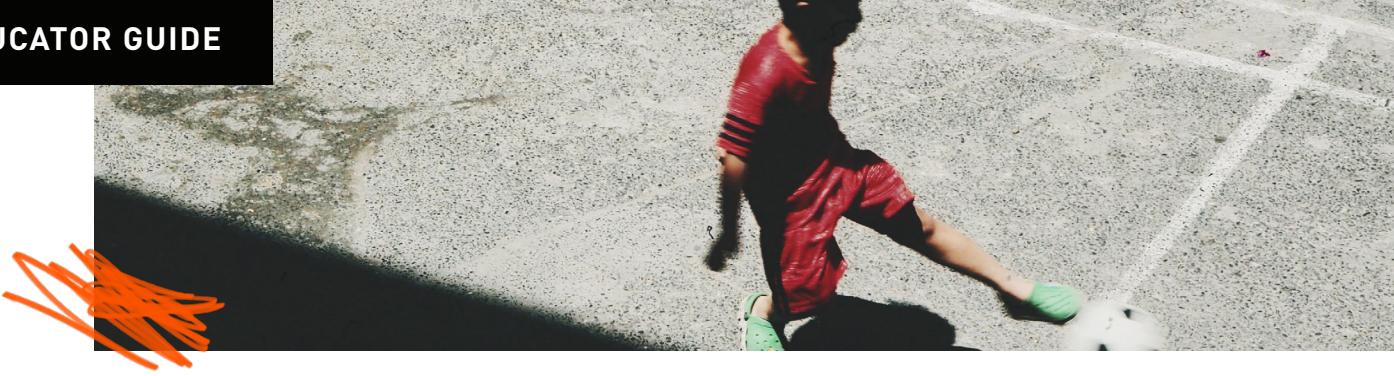# Educator Guide

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking is the recruitment, control, and use of people for their bodies and for their labor by means of force, fraud, and/or coercion. It is modern-day slavery and affects millions of men, women, and children around the world; it also happens in our community. Any minor under the age of 18 who is induced to perform a commercial sex act is a victim of human trafficking according to U.S. law, regardless of whether there is force, fraud, or coercion.[1]

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

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.

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[1] *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).*

[2] *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

[3] *Polaris, Human Trafficking Hotline (U.S., 2019), http://humantraffickinghotline.org/states*

[4] *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 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.

Force — Power	Fraud — Deception	Coercion — Manipulation
• Threats • Sexual abuse • Physical abuse • Substance abuse • Mental abuse • Forced labor • Control	• Exploiting youthful curiosity about sex • Grooming for trust • Seduction; wooing into romantic relationships • False promises of a better life financially, protection, and emotional security • Tricked job opportunities	• Shame and fear • Threats and pressure • Blackmail • Intimidation • Sextortion • Debt bondage • Bonded labor • Involuntary servitude

While not all behaviors lead to human trafficking, there are some signs that educators can look for in their students that may demonstrate characteristics related to human trafficking. Educators can look for physical, behavioral/emotional, or environmental/situational indicators in students

Physical Indicators	• Displays signs of exhaustion or lack of sleep at school • Shows signs of being denied food or dental and medical care • Evidences 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 Indicators	• 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 Indicators	• 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 a 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:

- Evidence-based or evidence-informed
- Age-appropriate developmental content for awareness and prevention (e.g., human rights, identity, healthy relationships, digital safety)
- Aligned to grade-level standards (e.g., health, wellness, social studies)
- Victim-centered, survivor and trauma informed
- Pre/post assessments and ways to collect data
- Diversity and culture relevant (i.e., gender, race, LGBTQ+)
- Preventive, protective, and risk factors
- Reporting procedures

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 but not limit to: 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 should, however, 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
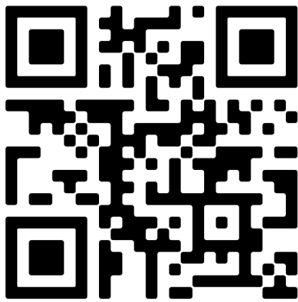### *Increase community, parent, and student awareness.*

- Partner with local law enforcement experts and advocate 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

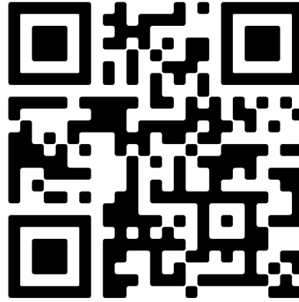| *School-based partners*	*Community-based partners*
- Administrators - Teachers - Resource-officers - Psychologists - Guidance counselors - Nurses - Bus drivers - Cafeteria workers	- Law enforcement - Child welfare services - Community/civic groups - Advocacy centers - Human trafficking coalitions - Faith-based institutions - Business owners - Transportation systems

Additional Resources

CAN YOU SEE ME?
Videos & Posters

PARENT GUIDES
For Kids & Teens

DIGITAL SAFETY GUIDE
For Teens

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

**National Center for Missing
and Exploited Children (NCMEC)**
1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678)
CyberTipline: MissingKids.org

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

For more resources, visit:
A21.ORG/EDUCATION