



Human Trafficking

A Family Safety Guide

A SURVIVOR'S PERSPECTIVE

When I was 14 I got into a really bad fight with my mom. I don't even remember now why we were arguing. I left the house slamming the door on the way out.

I was so mad. I just kept walking and walking.

I started noticing it was dark and I was downtown in a part of the city I'd never seen before. I saw people partying and heard club music going. I sat down on a bus stop bench but no busses were running, it was too late. A nice car pulled up, that was the first time I met him. It seemed like my only option at the time and I was still too mad to even think of going home.

I thought, well maybe I'll just ride around with him for a while.





10 Warning Signs

Here are 10 warning signs that a person you love may be in an at-risk situation.

- 1.** Is excessively monitored or controlled by a supposed guardian or older partner who claims to provide for their needs.
- 2.** Becomes detached or suddenly isolated from family members and friends.
- 3.** Is unable to give answers about their schedules, home life, living and work locations or conditions.
- 4.** Has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story and contradictory personal information (age, place of birth, family life).
- 5.** Has excessive security measures at his/her home or work (i.e., security cameras, boarded or covered windows) or constant movement of men/women at his/her home or work location.

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- 6.** Shows signs of physical or sexual abuse (bruises, cuts, burns, submissiveness, malnourishment); appears fearful, anxious, depressed, jumpy.
- 7.** Suffers from substance abuse problems (alcohol and/or drugs), an array of other psychological disorders, sexually transmitted diseases, or chronic illnesses.
- 8.** Carries multiple hotel key cards, lots of money, sharp objects (weapons).
- 9.** There is a sudden presence of an older boyfriend.
- 10.** Gets a tattoo with a name that is not their own, or that he/she is reluctant to explain.

The Shocking Truth

Child and teen sex-trafficking is real, scary and has devastating physical and mental health consequences for victimized youth.

Between 244,000 and 325,000 American teens are considered “at risk” for sexual exploitation, and an estimated 199,000 incidents of sexual exploitation of minors occur each year in the U.S.

In 2017, all 50 States reported multiple cases of child human trafficking.

Traffickers shop for their victims online, at shopping malls, bus stops, at school, at after-school functions, foster homes... basically anywhere teens hang out.

In Phoenix the average age a child is first exploited sexually is fourteen-years-old and the national average is thirteen.

Trafficking Boys

In 2017, 25% of homeless and at-risk boys in Phoenix reported being trafficked.

LGBTQ youth who had been kicked out of their home were 3 times more likely to be trafficked.

"I was first trafficked at 12 and no one found out about it until I was 14. My mother, she wouldn't care, she would care if I died, but that's all she cares about."

-14 year-old boy from the John Jay Study



13 Safety Tips For Children

1. Know your name, address, and phone number(s).
2. Learn how and when to call 911.
3. If you are scared of someone, **RUN** to safety.
4. It's okay to be **RUDE** to a grown-up if you feel you are unsafe.
5. Learn the difference between an "OKAY" secret and a "NOT OKAY" secret and beware of an adult that asks you to keep a secret from parents.
6. Don't let anyone on the phone or at the door know that you are home alone.
7. If you ever get lost in a mall, ask the closest store clerk for help and then stay where you are until you are found.
8. Avoid shortcuts when you are walking from one place to another.
9. If you are ever "scooped," scream, kick, bite and **FIGHT** as hard as you can to get away! **NEVER** trust what the "scooper" tells you.
10. Tell your parents or a trusted adult if someone is asking you to do something that makes you feel uncomfortable. Listen to your "Uh Oh" voice.
11. Always ask your parents for permission before getting on the Internet.
12. Never talk to people online without your parent's permission.
13. Never be afraid to tell your parents or an adult if someone asks you to keep a secret that makes you feel uncomfortable.

13 Safety Tips For Parents

1. Work hard to establish trust and communication with your children from day one.
2. Don't ever leave children unattended in a vehicle, whether it is running or not.
3. Make sure you know how to find or contact your children at all times.
4. Have a "Call List" of emergency contacts to call if they can't reach you.
5. Take an active role in your children's activities.
6. As tired as you may be, take the time to listen intently to your children when they tell you they had a bad dream. There could be a reason. Trust your instincts.
7. Talk to your children about inappropriate reports on the news and get their perspective.
8. Question and monitor anyone who takes an unusual interest in your children.
9. Teach your children that they can be rude to an adult if they feel threatened in any way. They need to hear it from you directly because this message often contradicts what they've been told.
10. Teach children the difference between an "OKAY" secret and a "NOT OKAY" secret. Assure your child that you would never want him/her to feel like they had to keep a "NOT OKAY" secret.
11. Have your children practice their most annoying scream. They may need to use it someday.
12. Check websites for registered offenders in your neighborhood. Talk to your children about why these people should be avoided.
13. Keep your family computer in a central location that is easily monitored and avoid letting your children have internet access in unsupervised areas (i.e. computers in their bedrooms, etc.).



Talking To Your Kids

The first tactic begins at home. We need to communicate with our kids.

Tip #1: Just do it. Talk to your kids so that they trust you and are willing to talk with you about anything. If they are being groomed by some predator, you want to know it!

Tip #2: Talk to your kids about what to do if they are threatened. Yell, run, fight. They need to be told that it is ok to behave in this way when they are under attack.

Tip #3: Talk to your kids about what is happening in the world. This goes for any threatening topic and you will have to adjust the type of words you use to be age-appropriate. Hiding your kids from the dangers of this world will not protect them when they are faced with a situation that could alter their lives in a matter of seconds.

Tip #4: If appropriate, use the internet to communicate with your kids. Know what they are looking at, what social media outlets they use and who they are talking to. It is harder these days, but communicating with your kids to know who their “friends” are, both in real life and virtually, is important.

Tip #5: Know when your child meets someone new and where they met them. When they come home from school, from the mall, from sports practice, ask them how their day was and if they met anyone new.



Sources

**National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
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Phoenix Dream Center Human Trafficking Program for Young Men and Women
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ASU Youth Experiences Survey
Polaris Project
Estes and Weiner
John Jay School of Criminal Justice
Office of Homeland Security**

**1-888-3737-888
Human Trafficking Hotline**

