2021 HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH

PREVENTING CHILD TRAFFICKING: INFORMATION FOR CAREGIVERS

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END CHILD TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION

TODAY'S DISCUSSION

- Common myths
- What is trafficking and who is at risk?
- Identifying common trafficking red flags and tactics traffickers use to groom and recruit children
- Discussing practical steps adults and caregivers can take to address the issue.

WHO IS LOVE146?

FOUNDED IN 2002, LOVE146'S MISSION IS TO JOURNEY ALONGSIDE CHILDREN IMPACTED BY TRAFFICKING TODAY AND PREVENT THE TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN TOMORROW.

It is Love146's belief that the trafficking of children will end when our collective expectations of what is possible, what is just, and what is effective have been reoriented. We believe that making the world a safe place for children is only possible through a bold, broad vision that cannot be achieved by only one organization or approach. At Love146, we connect the dots to understand how vulnerability operates in the lives of children, and intervene both to care for survivors who have been harmed and ultimately to prevent harm from happening in the first place. Our work is achieved through the power of relationships and collaboration, listening to those with lived experience and diverse backgrounds, scaling proven practices, and challenging the systems that leave children vulnerable. Our core commitment is to do what is best for children.

OUR VISION IS THE END OF CHILD TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION.

nothing less.

COMMON MYTHS

MYTH

Traffickers kidnap their victims and are usually:

- rich
- elite
- strangers
- government officials
- men

THE REALITY

Trafficking doesn't exclusively look like the movie *Taken*. According to Polaris, traffickers are **more likely to be someone the victim knows** like a romantic partner, a family member, teachers, or a peer. Traffickers will gradually build trust or use their position of power to exploit their victim. Traffickers can identify as any race, gender, class, etc. Stereotypes are harmful and distracting.

MYTH

Only women and girls are trafficked.

THE REALITY

Traffickers can and will exploit **anyone** regardless of gender identity. Traffickers look for vulnerabilities, risk factors, and opportunities for accessibility.

MYTH

Human trafficking is when someone is forced to perform commercial sex.

THE REALITY

Often, trafficking is reduced to sexual exploitation, **but** the legal definition includes sex **AND** labor trafficking.

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

TRAFFICKING VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT

Action

- Recruitment
- Harboring
- Providing
- Obtaining
- Transporting

Means

- Force
- Fraud
- Coercion

Purpose

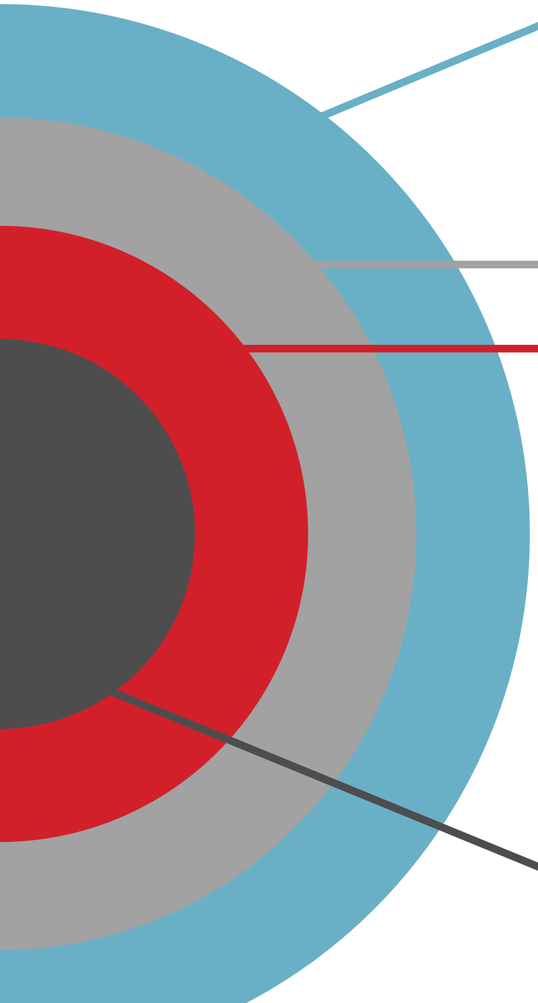
- Commercial sex
- Involuntary servitude
- Bonded labor

WHO IS VULNERABLE?



ALL YOUTH EXPERIENCE VULNERABILITIES.

RISK FACTORS



SOCIETY

- Stereotypes
- Materialistic Culture
- Phobias
- Laws and Policies
- Sexualizing Youth
- Migratory Status
- Social Norms
- Inequality
- Media

COMMUNITY

- Poverty
- Street Culture
- Lack of Social Supports
- High Level of Transience
- Limited Employment Opportunities
- High Levels of Incarceration
- High Levels of Family Disruption
- Gangs
- System Involved

RELATIONAL

- Low Emotional Attachment to Caregivers
- Separated/Divorced Parents
- Dating Violence
- Incarcerated/Deceased Family Member
- Low Parental Involvement
- Family Substance Use/Abuse
- Bullying
- Peers in “the life”
- Domestic Violence in the Home

INDIVIDUAL

- History of Trauma
- Mental Illness
- Low IQ
- Low Self-Esteem
- Personal Substance Abuse
- Disabilities
- Non-English Monolingual
- Gender Non-Conforming/ Non-Binary Identity

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WHO ARE TRAFFICKERS?



RECRUITMENT & GROOMING

RECRUITMENT & GROOMING

Accessibility → Abuse of Power → Establishing Connection, Building Trust, Maintaining Control

WHAT IS GROOMING?



EMOTIONAL BOND



EMPLOYER GROOMING



ONLINE GROOMING
(SEXTORTION)



FAKE LOVE

HOW CAN 'TRUSTED' ADULTS FACILITATE GROOMING?

- Forcing children to kiss & hug family members, not giving them options (consent)
- Telling them to obey and listen to adults/elders
    - e.g. law enforcement, educators, coaches, mentors, health providers, community members
- Telling them to always respect their elders

> "DON'T TALK TO STRANGERS!"

IDENTIFYING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

WHY IS IDENTIFICATION DIFFICULT?

VICTIM BLAMING

- Shame
- Embarrassment
- Language
- Fear
- Self blame
- Negative treatment

NOT SELF-IDENTIFYING AS A VICTIM

WHY IS IDENTIFICATION DIFFICULT?

GENERATIONAL NORMS

- Sensationalized violence, Phobias/Stereotypes
- Sexualization of youth (esp. Youth of color)
- Normalizes of sharing of pictures among teens
- Normalizes of dating websites for casual sex/hook up
- Easy exchange of money through apps
- Negative effects of Gender Roles and Norms

RED FLAGS OF SEX TRAFFICKING

- Secrecy in whereabouts; unaccounted for time
- Chronically running away/missing from care/truancy
- Risky sexual behavior
- Risky online behavior/posting or sharing explicit materials
- Substance abuse
- Loss of interest in age appropriate activities
- Controlling/abusive dating relationships
- Sudden changes in behavior or school performance
- Multiple anonymous sex partners
- Negative influential peer relationships
- Secretive about who they are talking to
- Youth suddenly has a lot of new stuff
- New older romantic partner
- Becoming more and more isolated from family, friends, others

RED FLAGS OF LABOR TRAFFICKING

- Unexplained or work related physical injuries
- Has debt to employer or recruiter that they cannot pay off
- Informal or verbal job agreement/contract
- Not allowed to take adequate breaks, food or water while at work
- Feels as if they can not stop working or leave their situation
- Was recruited for different work than they are doing
- Required to live in housing provided by employer
- Has been abused or threatened with harm by employer or supervisor
- Not provided with adequate personal protective equipment for hazardous work
- Buys toiletries or basic necessities in the same place where they live/work
- Has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story; contradictory personal information (age, place of birth, family life)

PRACTICAL STEPS

1

START THE CONVERSATION

2

PREVENTION CURRICULA & TRAININGS

3

KNOW THE SIGNS OF RED FLAGS

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OUR RESPONSIBILITY: REPORT ALL SUSPECTED CASES

Call the Texas Abuse Hotline

800-252-5400

and

The National Human Trafficking Hotline

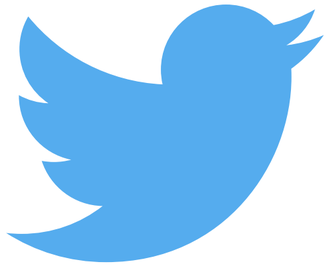
888-373-7888

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THANK YOU!