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How To Involve Your Community in The Fight Against Child Sex Trafficking

The following information is either quoted directly and/or paraphrased from the wonderful organization(s) cited at the end of this document

92% of sex trafficking survivors were sexually abused as children!

To prevent children from being exploited, it's important to recognize the risk factors and indicators of child sex trafficking. Educate yourself and your community on what child sex trafficking is and how to recognize the signs of exploitation of another person. Here are some things you can do:

What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is the act of compelling a person to engage in sexual acts or forced labor. Sexual predators can target your children even when your child is *in the room down the hall*.

How is human trafficking different from migrant smuggling?

While trafficking in persons is a crime that aims to exploit a person who may or may not be a migrant, smuggling of migrants does not, by definition, involve the exploitation of the migrant. Migrant smuggling always crosses national borders.

What is sex trafficking?

Sex trafficking is when a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud and/or coercion, or when the person induced to perform the act is under 18 years old. A commercial sex act means any item of value is traded for any sexual service (prostitution, pornography, or sexual performance).

What is child sex trafficking in the United States?

Domestic minor sex trafficking is the commercial sexual exploitation of American children within U.S. borders for monetary or other compensation (shelter, food, drugs, etc). This is synonymous with child sex slavery, prostitution of children, and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).

Who are the traffickers?

While many traffickers have criminal backgrounds and use trafficking as a direct source of income, there are also business owners, intimate partners and other family members involved in human trafficking.

What is the difference between a pimp and a trafficker?

There is no difference. A pimp is a trafficker, and vice versa. They are interchangeable names. A trafficker/pimp is typically an adult (male/female) who uses force, fraud, or coercion to engage a minor in commercial sex in order to profit from the exploitation of that child.

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Who is vulnerable?

Human trafficking can happen to anyone, but some people are more vulnerable than others. Significant risk factors include recent migration or relocation, substance use, mental health concerns, involvement with the child welfare system and being a runaway or homeless youth. Age is a primary factor of vulnerability as well. Pre-teen or adolescent girls are more susceptible to the calculated advances, deception, and manipulation tactics used by traffickers – no youth is exempt from falling prey to these tactics.

Traffickers target locations youths frequent such as social media sites, schools, malls, parks, bus stops, shelters, and group homes. As noted above, runaway or homeless youths, as well as those with a history of physical and sexual abuse have increased risks of being trafficked.

KNOW THE FACTS concerning child sex trafficking

- Human trafficking is the 2nd largest criminal enterprise in the world.
- Traffickers come from all parts of society – every race, gender, and socio-economic group.
- Every 30 seconds a child or teen is sold in slavery.
- Average age of exploitation is 12-15 years old (as young as 3 months old have been sold!) in the U.S.
- The number of cases increase every year in the U.S.
- Victims come from all communities across the U.S.

KNOW THE SIGNS of Child Sex Trafficking in your community

- Is the potential victim in possession of their own travel and identification documents?
- Is the victim coached on what to say to community members?
- Does someone else communicate for the victim?
- Has the victim or their family been threatened with harm, deportation, or criminal charges if they attempt to leave their situation?
- Has the victim been harmed, deprived of food, water, sleep, medical care, or other life necessities?
- Is the victim free to contact friends or family without being coached or monitored?
- Is the victim living in substandard housing?

When we understand how vulnerable communities are to and how devastating communities are impacted help you know what to do, who to contact, and how to report it.

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY – How can you get involved?

REPORT IT:

- The National Human Trafficking Hotline in your cell phone: call 888-373-7888 (24 hours/day, 7 days/week, 365 days/year). www.humantraffickinghotline.org
- Text INFO or HELP to: BeFree 233733
- Call 911
- The National Runaway Switchboard: 1-800-RUNAWAY. www.1800RUNAWAY.org

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- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC): 1-800-843-5678.
www.missingkids.org
- Report suspected human trafficking to federal law enforcement by calling 1-866-347-2423.
- CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE 800-344-6000
- The following link provides a card with a brief list of common indicators of human trafficking, the difference between human smuggling and human trafficking, and a DHS reporting option:
<https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/materials/indicator-card>

POST IT: Volunteer to place Freedom Stickers inside bathroom stalls, which are often the only places a victim of human trafficking is alone and able to ask for help.

LEARN: There are many myths about HT that circulate. Go beyond surface knowledge. Take time to find out the truth, read a book, attend a presentation, and learn more so you can really know it when you see it.

VOLUNTEER: Get Involved with an anti-human trafficking organization in your area!

PREVENT IT: Encourage schools to include anti-trafficking education in their curriculum.

DONATE: Nonprofit organizations that work to stop human trafficking day in and day out need your help. **Please consider donating to HuMannaTea For All™ at:**
<https://thecause.org/partners/humannatea-for-all/>

Share this resource with your community at local events and public gatherings to expand awareness in your community.

Sources:

<https://www.state.gov/domestic-trafficking-hotlines>

<https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign>

<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en>

<https://www.justice.gov/usao-md/page/file/1573261/download>

<https://nationaldaycalendar.com/national-human-trafficking-awareness-day-january-11>

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