



Parent Guide For Teens





WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?



DEFINITION

Human trafficking is the recruitment, control, and use of people for their bodies and for their labor. It is modern-day slavery and affects millions of men, women, and children around the world; it also happens in our community.

INDICATORS

Some signs and red flags that your teen is possibly being trafficked or groomed for trafficking include:

- Acts uncharacteristically promiscuous and/or makes references to sexual situations or terminology that are beyond age-specific norms
- Displays sudden changes in their academics, behavior, or attire
- Acquires new and oftentimes older friends or has a noticeably older “boyfriend” or “girlfriend”
- Owns new items that they would not be able to afford on their own (e.g., cell phones, new clothes, beauty products, manicures, or digital items such as avatar skins for online gaming)
- Chats frequently online, over social media platforms, or within video games (they often try to hide this behavior)

LOCATIONS

Places where teens have been recruited into trafficking include social media platforms, video game live communication or chat rooms, friends’ homes, group homes, parties, and jobs that target teens primarily (e.g. fast food restaurants, shopping malls, movie theaters).

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 Teen

HOW DO YOU TALK WITH YOUR TEEN ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Open communication and creating an environment that builds trust is key to safeguarding your teen. Empower your teen to protect themselves by building trust so that they know they can come to you with their concerns, vulnerabilities, and experiences. The goal is to create a safe place where your teen feels comfortable to discuss any topic.

- ▶ **SAY:** “Nothing you tell me will surprise me, even if it is as bad as you think it is. Don’t be afraid to tell me things that seem unheard of or that reveal you broke rules or didn’t listen to me. I’m concerned because there are people who may act like they care for you, and want to give you the world, but these are just ways to get you to do things for them selfishly. There may be times when you meet someone who promises to love you, buy you things, or be a listening ear, but then asks you to do something that makes you feel uncomfortable. Then, you may feel scared to tell me once these things have happened. I am here for you and want to help guide you through life, no matter what happens. I want to help you avoid uncomfortable or harmful situations; I want you to feel safe. Let’s talk.”

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

PERSONAL VALUE

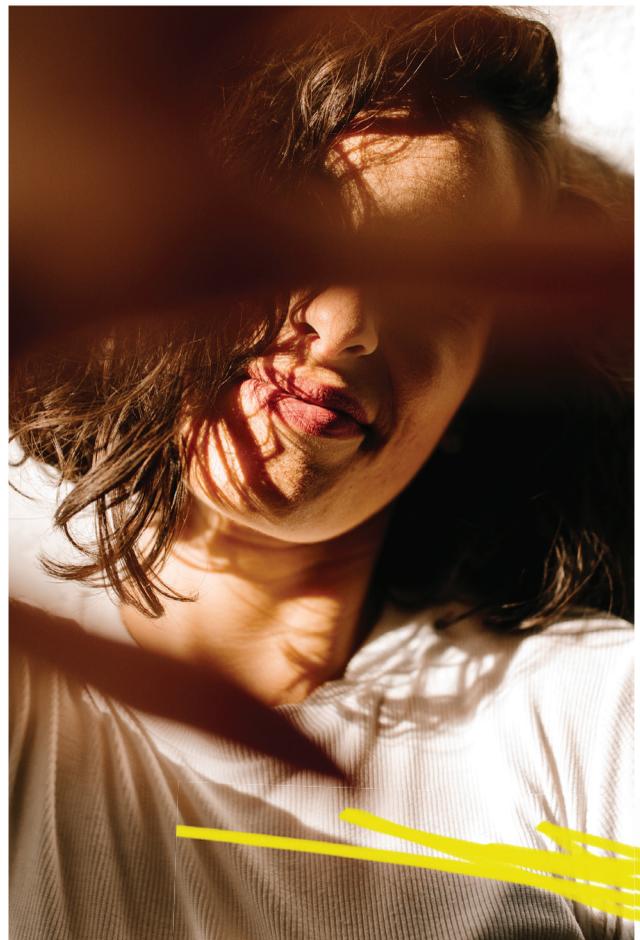
Explain how their body is never meant to be used to get something or to pay for something (e.g. showing body parts for money or gifts).

PERSONAL 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. In addition, it would be helpful to explain why an individual may try to push or test those personal boundaries.

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Examine healthy vs. unhealthy relationships. For example, explaining that in a healthy committed relationship, a partner should not ask you to do something you are not comfortable doing or isolate you from your family and friends.



Preventative Safety Measures

Human Rights: Empower your teen with the ability to say no when they feel uncomfortable. Remind them that they have the right to say no to anyone if they feel unsafe or are feeling pressured or uncomfortable.

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



“Individuals can now use websites and social media to advertise, schedule, and purchase sexual encounters with minors. The Internet and mobile devices also allow pimps and traffickers to reach a larger clientele base than in the past, which may expose victims to greater risks and dangers.”¹

¹The United States Department of Justice, “Child Sex Trafficking,” 2017, <https://www.justice.gov/criminal-ceos/child-sex-trafficking>



Online Safety Tips to Discuss

Identity and Location

- Use a screen name different from your real name
- Avoid posting any identifiable information (e.g. pictures of you in front of your home or places that you frequent)
- Block someone if they make you feel uncomfortable or have repeated unwanted or uninvited communication

Photos

- Remember images you post online can never really be deleted
- Photos and screenshots can be easily saved and shared
- Ask yourself before sending a photo, “would it be ok if everyone at school saw this photo?”
- Tell someone if you receive a photo that includes unwanted or uninvited content

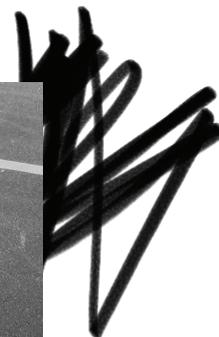
Public Online Sites

- Discuss the differences between sites that make you feel safe or unsafe
- Avoid talking to untrusted or unknown people on chat rooms or private messenger apps
- Remember that you never really know who is on the other side of the screen; their intentions may be different from what they say they are

Safety Routes

- Examine your teen’s routes and discuss ways they can avoid danger
- Determine safe places to go and safe people to call if they feel uneasy
- Ensure that your teen knows the address of where they are and where they are going in case they need to be picked up because they feel uncomfortable
- Have your teen share their location with you on their cell

Group Safety: Stay in a group as much as possible and never accept a ride from a stranger or anyone you do not trust or who makes you feel uncomfortable.





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

- Spend quality time with your teen
- Monitor your teen's activities online and offline
- Be mindful of your teen's personal items and ask questions if you see expensive electronics, clothing, purses, makeup, or items that you did not pay for and your teen could not afford on their own
- Know who your teen hangs out with and who they are texting
- Foster a healthy relationship with your teen so they will communicate and come to you about uncomfortable or unsafe situations
- Create a contact plan that includes a way for your teen to ask for your help if they get into an uncomfortable situation (without getting in trouble)
- Have your teen memorize 2-3 trusted adults' phone numbers in case of an emergency
- Provide guidelines for safe online measures (e.g. designated locations for using technology devices in the home, access to certain websites, and social media)
- Add the trafficking hotline numbers into your phone's contact list (and into your teen's phone)
- Tell your teen 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