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Human Trafficking

Keeping Children Safer

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Myths about Child Human Trafficking

It happens somewhere else –
outside of United States

Most trafficking victims
are smuggled across borders

Most children are taken by strangers

Boys are not at risk

Why Parents Need to Be Informed

Michigan ranks among states with the highest incidence of human trafficking

Human trafficking is underreported. It happens more often than we hear about

Most children are not "taken" as seen on television but are recruited

Children can be made aware of potential red flags

There are warning signs that can be preventative.

Who is Most at Risk

- National average age 12-13
- Girls most likely to report, boys at risk but underreported
- Youth experiencing home/social difficulties
- Youth seeking acceptance
- Youth with limited positive social networks



Taken

VS.

Recruited

Less Likely

Youth is kidnapped from shopping mall by stranger, taken to another state and forced into human trafficking

More Likely

Youth are manipulated and coerced over time into entering a "relationship" that results in forced sexual, labor, or criminal exploitation.



Who Grooms or Recruits Youth

Family members

Friends

Someone youth meets online

What is Grooming or Recruitment Period

- Exploiter quickly manipulates youth's vulnerabilities and insecurities
 - I'm the only one who understands you
 - I can see qualities in you that others can't
 - You can trust me
 - I can make you famous
 - I will take care of you through gifts, money, alcohol and drugs
 - It's us against the world
 - I have information that I could use against you
 - Keep our "relationship" a secret"

How to Keep Your Child Safer

Establish and maintain a relationship based on trust and communication with your child

Talk with your child about healthy vs. unhealthy relationships

Acknowledge when your child appears to be struggling and offer outside help

Know your child's friends and your child's whereabouts

* Be aware of and teach your child online safety

What Makes Some Children Especially Vulnerable to Grooming/Recruitment

Poor self- image

Depression/anxiety

Social skills
challenges

Tensions with
parental
relationship

Little parental
oversight

Red Flags of Possible Grooming

- Child/Youth
 - is more secretive
 - cannot account for time spent away from home
 - has new older friend
 - has unexplained money/gifts/purses/cell phone
 - has less interest in school, activities, family, and friends
 - has unexplained bumps, bruises
 - withdrawn, anxious or distracted
 - changes in dress and appearance

Who to Contact if You Suspect Recruiting or Child Trafficking

- Local Police
- National Human Trafficking Hotline 888 373-7888
- Text to BeFree (233733)
- Website: humantraffickinghotline.org



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