SEX TRAFFICKING 101
*a **quick guide** for parents and educators*

The rise of the internet and social media has provided new avenues for traffickers to exploit potential victims, making sex trafficking the second most profitable criminal activity in the United States. Traffickers can use online platforms to identify and target vulnerable individuals, establish communication, and lure them into exploitative situations. Accessibility to the internet and online platforms widens the reach of traffickers, enabling them to connect with potential victims globally. Because traffickers are looking for vulnerable, easy targets, it is critical for parents and caregivers to be informed and aware of this growing problem.

Facts About Sex Trafficking

- More than 50% of all victims are under the age of 18
- Both boys and girls fall victim to sex trafficking
- The average age a child becomes involved in sex trafficking is 12 years old
- Sex trafficking can take place on the internet, in private homes, massage parlors, hotels, at major festivals and sporting events, among other locations
- More than half of sex trafficking victims are lured into their situation online, making the internet the most common place where victims are recruited
- It can happen in any community--cases of sex trafficking have been reported in all 50 states

A-M-P Model, Trafficking Defined

ACTION		MEANS	PURPOSE
- *Induce* - *Recruits* - *Harbors*	- *Transports* - *Provides* - *Obtains*	- *Force* - *Fraud* - *Coercion*	- *Commerical Sex (Sex Trafficking)* - *Labor/Services (Labor Trafficking)*

Traffickers Targeting Minors Look For 3 Things:

1) **Accessibility**- children with access to internet information, are left at home alone, and/or display a lack of education or support services.

2) **Suggestibility**- children who are more inclined to accept and act on the suggestions of others.

3) **Vulnerability**- children facing economic hardships, social isolation, lack of education, or those who have experienced conflict, natural disasters, or other traumatic events. Accessibility allows traffickers to identify and exploit these vulnerabilities.

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Convicted Online Sex Offenders Share That They Would:

- Find out interests of children and attempt to relate to their interests
- Look for children who did not have people listening to them at home
- Determine if child's parents were involved in their lives so they could fill that role
- Look for instances where parents were not aware of struggles bothering them
- Look for children who seemed lonely and looking for someone to relate to them

Scout, Manipulate, Trap: A Common Online Sex Trafficking Cycle (The Grooming Process)

- **Scout**: Trafficker obtains information from children through online games or casual conversations. Trafficker targets a victim, often a child with emotional neediness, low self-confidence, or living in economically stressful conditions.
- **Manipulate**: Trafficker attempts to establish trust and become friends with victim, finds a way for victim to privately communicate, whether through social networks, online video games, forums, or chat rooms, and creates a wedge between child and parents.
- **Trap**: Abuse begins, often in the form of indecent exposure, threats, violence, fear or blackmail.

How Parents and Caregivers Can Protect Children from Human Trafficking:

- Educate ourselves and educate children
- Monitor online activity
- Maintain open dialogue and dig deeper when something seems off with a child
- React swiftly and do not ignore the signs

Don't Ignore It, Talk About It!

Conversation Starter: "Have strangers ask to be my friend online sometimes. What do you do when an online stranger tries to befriend you?"

Ask, "Has an online stranger...

- Asked you for personal information, like where you are from, what grade you are in, what school you go to...?"
- Asked you for pictures or what color hair you have in real life?"
- Sent you pictures?"
- Said anything to make you feel uncomfortable?"
- Given you digital gifts or money through your online games?"
- Offered to send you gifts or money in real life?"

safety & prevention 101
RULES N' TOOLS®

No child is immune to online threats: Parents are the "first line of defense."

- Know your child's user names and passwords for email and social media.

- Check to see if your child has any hidden apps or accounts.

- Teach your child to never share personally identifiable information (PII) including date of birth, address, full name, school or any image that can be used to identify or track your child down.

- Be alert to warning signs your child may be in contact with an online predator, especially if your child becomes secretive or obsessive about online activities, gets angry when he or she can't get online, receives/makes phone calls from people you do not know or recognize, changes screens or turns off computer when an adult enters a room, withdraws from family and friends, or receives gifts, mail, or packages from someone you do not know.

- Block strangers and use privacy settings on social networking pages.

- Remind your child to NEVER arrange to meet with someone that he/she has only met online, and to come to you if a request for an in-person meeting has been made

- Implement Safety Rules and Software tools ("*Rules 'N Tools®*") on all internet-enabled devices and platforms used by your child. See the **Enough Is Enough®** *"Rules 'N Tools®"* guide at internetsafety101.org/safety-intro

- Essential software tools include setting age-appropriate filters, monitoring and time management software.

- Have your child sign the Have your child sign the **Family Contract for Smart Phones and Digital Devices**

Enough Is Enough® (EIE) Quick Guides are based on EIE's **Internet Safety 101®** Emmy Award-winning multi-media program and website designed to educate, equip and empower parents, educators and other adults with information needed to protect children from internet dangers.

For more information, visit internetsafety101.org and enough.org

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH®
MAKING THE INTERNET SAFER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES