

# SEX TRAFFICKING RED FLAGS



## HISTORY OF PROSTITUTION

- History of prior physical or sexual abuse
- History of prostitution
- History of addiction supported by prostitution
- Person engaged in prostitution working with a "manager" or "service"
- Language referring to "the track," "the life," "the game," "the family," "tricks," "licks," "incall/outcall," and online prostitution sites like City X, Skip the Games, ECCIE, and P411
- Hostility toward or fear of law enforcement, child welfare, or anything else representing the system
- Dancing at strip clubs, but accompanied by a "manager" or "boyfriend"
- Working VIP rooms at strip clubs
- Frequenting areas of town known for street prostitution

## INTERNET USE

- Featured in Internet sex advertisements
- Use of fake names for Internet sex ads or street prostitution
- Fake name chosen by trafficker
- Person not knowing the "nickname" that they are called on Internet sex ads on which they are posted or that they are posted at all
- Overtly sexual online social media profile
- Suggestive memes that include "pimp and hoe," pornographic images, making money references, and/or hustle language
- Social media with conversations between sex buyers and person engaged in prostitution or between trafficker and person engaged in prostitution
- Trafficker solicitations via social media: offers to be their "king" or their "Daddy"
- Internet sex ads linked to a person, business name, or phone number on Google

## **TRAFFICKER CONTROL**

- Claim of boyfriend/girlfriend relationship with trafficker
- Evidence of controlling relationship:
  - Schedule and activities dictated by third-party
  - Travel location and time dictated by third-party
  - Dependent on third-party for basic necessities
  - Isolation from friends and family
  - Monitored or censored communications
  - Unable to make simple decisions without approval from “significant other”
  - One party is aggressive or domineering, while other party is submissive, fearful, anxious, depressed, or unable to make eye contact
  - Always accompanied
- Threats to call Child Protective Services (CPS) and allege abuse or neglect, if other party does not agree to demands
- Money earned by one party, but controlled by another
- Purchases made directly by trafficker
- Third-party control over identifying documents
- Not allowed to answer for themselves
- Use of victim name, identity, or credit to rent hotel rooms, apartments, and make purchases

## **MEDICAL INDICATORS**

- Visible injuries: bruising, swelling, redness, scarring, and/or burns
- Multiple Sexual Assault Nurse Examinations (SANE)
- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Urinary tract infections (UTIs)
- Chronic untreated conditions
- Malnutrition
- Maladaptive coping mechanisms, including drug and alcohol dependence
- Flat affect, desensitized, and/or minimizing
- Unable to emotionally connect in normal circumstances

- Exhaustion

## **TATTOOS & BRANDING**

- Gang signs and/or affiliation
- Branding and tattoos
  - Placement: back of neck, underarm, ankle, above the breasts, above the vaginal line
  - Words or symbols related to prostitution or sex
  - Words or symbols related to making money through sex
  - Tattoos that imply dominance, ownership, or dehumanization
  - Tattoos mixing violence and sexualization
- Person receiving tattoo is underage and did not have parental consent
- Bringing more than one person for the same or similar tattoo as a group or over time
- Tattoo matching or thematically similar to trafficker's tattoo
- Person receiving tattoo is hesitant, tries to leave, or has to be accompanied by someone else to have it done
- Person ashamed of or does not want to talk about their tattoo
- Story about tattoo patently false

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

- Unannounced multi-day deviation from normal routine
- Living out of hotels or jumping from location to location
- Subsisting on fast food located near hotel brought in by trafficker
- Remaining in hotel for days at a time while trafficker comes and goes
- Unplanned/abrupt travel or movement
- Living out of a car with items, such as:
  - Hotel receipts or hotel key cards
  - Drugstore receipts for lubricants, condoms, douche, and/or feminine hygiene products
  - Bags of lingerie
  - Condoms new or used
- Unexplained source of money or luxury items

- Multiple hotel keys
- Rolls of money
- Use of prepaid credit cards or gift cards to book hotels
- Conversion of gift cards to crypto currency to make online purchases
- Fake or no identification
- Phone provided by and controlled by a third-party
- Multiple phones with no source of income
- Use of burner phones

## **CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING EARLY WARNING SYSTEM**

### **FAMILY & HOMELIFE**

- Family involvement in prostitution, drugs, cartel, gang
- Family involvement in crime as means of generating income
- Family focus on status items: phones, electronics, or clothes instead of necessities
- Family who has openly given up on restraining child's behavior
- Family openly hostile to child: name calling, demeaning behavior
- Family acceptance of child not being home
- Family allowing "boyfriend" to live in the home and with the child
- Pornography use in the home

### **VICTIM CHARACTERISTICS**

- Child with history of running away
- Child thinks that "adult life" and "independence" are the greatest values
- Prior history of child sexual or physical abuse
- Early and regular exposure to pornography
- Child's value and identity centered around sex
- Child with in-depth knowledge of life on the streets and the business of hustling for money
- Child has a sexualized appearance

- Child appears much older than stated age
- Child Protective Service (CPS) history
- Juvenile probation and/or Residential Treatment Center (RTC) placements
- Unexplained exhaustion
- Unexplained medical issues: gynecological, chronic infections, or exposure to dangerous locations
- Flat affect, minimizing, or discounting
- Diagnoses of bipolar, oppositional defiance disorder, or personality disorder not otherwise specified

## **VICTIM BEHAVIORS**

- Irregular school attendance, odd absences, or leaving campus
- Changes in school behavior: grades, friends, comportment, dress, attitude, and/or activities
- Spending significant time with older individuals
- Child giving money to older "friend/boyfriend"
- Child having sex with friends of boyfriend
- Money or luxury items with unidentified or unapproved source
- Child lying about where he or she is going and with whom
- Rehearsed or scripted story, but inconsistent when questioned
- Child possesses fake identification
- Child living double life – one accessible to family and school and another one where accessible by trafficker
- Promiscuity with age level or older individuals
- Sexual acting out
- Hostile to law enforcement/CPS/governmental organizations

## **INTERNET USE**

- Unmonitored, unlimited social media, and/or Internet gaming access
- Public social media profiles and social media and gaming friendships with strangers
- Hidden apps, multiple social media accounts, or phones
- Child online offering to trade sex for drugs

- Sexualized conversations on social media
- History of pornographic selfies and sexting
- Suggestive memes that include “pimp and hoe,” pornographic images, making money references, and/or hustle language
- Photos or videos of child or friends flashing cash, weapons, or drugs on social media

**Please Note:** The Red Flags and Early Warning System Indicators are to be viewed within an individual's context and circumstances. For instance, someone who is an airline pilot may have multiple hotel keys due to the fact that she travels for a living, while if you saw those same hotel keys on a 16-year-old child, it could raise potential concerns. No one Red Flag or Indicator means that an individual is being trafficked. If you are viewing multiple Red Flags or Indicators, it is a cause for concern and a reason to start asking questions and trying to obtain more information, if you can do so without putting yourself or the person you are concerned about in danger. In the end, if you believe that someone is being trafficked and is in immediate danger, call 911 and provide descriptions of cars, people, locations, etc. to law enforcement, or if you need to remain anonymous, you can call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1 (888) 3737-888.