



Warning Signs for School Administrators, Educators, & Others who work with Students



(Not all victims present any/all symptoms)

Each year, as many as 100,000–300,000 American children are at risk of being trafficked for commercial sex in the United States. The average age a girl enters the commercial sex trade is 12–14 years old. For boys, it’s even younger – just 11–13 years old.

Sources: U.S. Department of Justice, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

IMPORTANT!
Any child 17 & under engaged in commercial sex is a trafficked victim regardless of force, fraud, or coercion

ACADEMIC SIGNS

- Has unexplained absences or truancy
- Attends school on an irregular basis
- Grades drop

PHYSICAL SIGNS

- Exhibits physical trauma, withdrawn behavior, depression or fear
- Is hungry, malnourished or inappropriately dressed (based on weather)
- Has bruises or rope burns (especially around wrists, neck, or ankles) or multiple scars
- Appears malnourished or has other health concerns including STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infections), pregnancies, broken bones, black eyes, urinary tract infections, depression, fatigued, etc.

SOCIAL SIGNS

- Knowledge of the commercial sex industry. Uses lingo: “the Life,” “the Game,” “Daddy,” for boyfriend, “Track” or “Stroll,” refers to dates as “Johns” or “Tricks.”
- Chronically runs away from home or history of homelessness
- Refers to frequent travel to other cities
- Lacks control over his or her schedule or identification documents
- Shows signs of drug addiction
- Demonstrates a sudden change in attire, behavior, or material possessions (eg: *has expensive items*)
- Makes references to sexual situations that are beyond age-specific norms
- Engages in promiscuous behavior
- Loses interest in old friends/activities/organizations
- Has unexplained cell phone or gets calls during school and has to leave or has a GPS/ tracking device
- Works for little or no pay, or the employer keeps identification documents and/or confiscates wages. Accumulates debt to employer while at work or recruited for work with promises of easy money
- Engages in sexual activity in exchange for money or anything of value (*can include clothing, food, shelter, other goods and resources*). Has an explicitly sexual online profile via internet community or social networking sites.

**If you see something, say something:
Call 1-888-3737-888 or Text BE FREE to 233733**

Consult *Polaris Project’s* “Red Flags & Indicators” for a complete list.

dhs.gov/bluecampaign | polarisproject.org | humantrafficking.msu.edu

Compiled by SW Michigan Human Trafficking Task Force  Like us on Facebook!