



# TIPS FOR PARENTS

## What is human trafficking?

When someone is commercially exploited for work or sex by using force, fraud, or coercion;

OR

If someone under 18 years old is participating in commercial sex.



Be vigilant. Be observant. Be someone's hero.

If you suspect someone you know might be in a trafficking situation, call the national hotline at 888-373-7888 or send a text to BEFREE (233733).

## Red Flags:

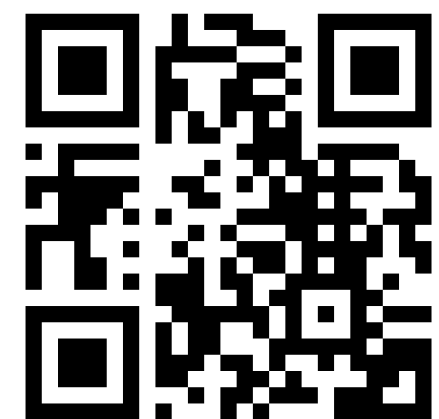
- Unusual absences from school
- Running away from home
- Frequent travel to other cities
- Withdrawn behavior and fear
- Much older boyfriend/friend
- Signs of drug addiction
- Sudden, unexplained expensive clothing/gifts
- Dressed inappropriately for the surroundings or weather
- Previously untreated injuries
- Multiple or botched abortions/STIs
- Branding by tattoos or burning/cutting
- Attempts to hide online activity
- Calls, texts to unknown numbers
- Sudden or drastic change in demeanor or behavior

\*\*These don't necessarily mean your child is being trafficked, but may be an indicator that something isn't right and deserves attention.\*\*

## Tips for Parents:

### Talk early and talk often about tough decisions they may face

- Resources to help you start the conversations:
  - Drugs & Alcohol: <http://www.talksooner.org/parents>
  - Online Safety: [www.netsmartz.org/Parents](http://www.netsmartz.org/Parents)
  - Sex:
    - Ages 3-12 <http://www.parenting.com/article/talking-to-kids-about-sex-21335549>
    - Ages 12+ [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/protective/pdf/talking\\_teens.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/protective/pdf/talking_teens.pdf)
- Discuss "Tips for Teens" handout [www.lhttf.org/resources](http://www.lhttf.org/resources)
- Get to know their friends.
- Make sure a trusted adult is supervising your child when they are away from home.
- Connect them with a mentor. Sometimes it's easier to talk to someone who isn't your parent.
- If your child has experienced abuse or engages in self-harm, connect them with a counselor.



Additional Resources

### The Internet & Phone

- Monitor your child's phone regularly, and have access to all passwords. See [www.protectyoungeyes.com](http://www.protectyoungeyes.com)
- Have your child show you what apps they have and how they work on their phones.
- Install filtering programs and parental controls on all internet-connected devices.
  - Check out: [www.teensafe.com](http://www.teensafe.com) or [www.covenanteyes.com](http://www.covenanteyes.com)
- Talk to your child about any warning signs you observe, and reach out to a counselor or school staff member.
- Consider getting a Gabb phone: No internet. No games. No social media. No worries. [www.gabb.com](http://www.gabb.com)

### Show Unconditional Love

- The more they feel loved at home, the less likely they will search for love from someone else. Discover their love language: [5lovelanguages.com/resource/the-five-love-languages-of-children](http://5lovelanguages.com/resource/the-five-love-languages-of-children)
- Traffickers target vulnerabilities. Help children recognize or develop their value.
- Use affirming, non-judgemental language while communicating with your child.
- Help and support for victims. <https://www.hopeprojectusa.org>

[www.lhttf.org](http://www.lhttf.org)

[www.facebook.com/lakeshorehumantraffickingtaskforce](http://www.facebook.com/lakeshorehumantraffickingtaskforce)