



PARENTS... ARE YOU CONCERNED YOUR CHILD MAY BE A VICTIM OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING?



STEP 1: CALL THE POLICE.

Report your suspicions with as much supporting evidence as possible. Pimps are violent and dangerous criminals and your child is not safe in their presence. Think about the physical safety of your child and your family. Teens often reconnect with their trafficker so be sure to explain why this is a bad idea and consider restricting or monitoring all communication channels.

STEP 2: LEARN ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S RIGHTS AS A VICTIM.

Continue to offer support, compassionate listening, and let your child know that he/she is a victim of a crime and that you love him/her. Sex trafficking victims have endured a high level of trauma and require specialized services and interventions. Victims of trauma can experience extreme stress that impacts the person's ability to cope and function.

STEP 3: HAVE YOUR CHILD TESTED.

Make sure to have your child tested for sexually transmitted diseases right away. If left untreated, normally curable disease can cause long-term complications and infertility.

STEP 4: SEEK LONG-TERM COUNSELING.

Counseling with a trusted provider who is trained in trauma and has experience working with victims of sex trafficking will be beneficial for long-term healing.

STEP 5: THINK ABOUT PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY.

You can help your children feel safe by helping them identify things that instill feelings of safety and help them stay away from people, places, and things that make them feel unsafe. If your children are involved with people at school that are influencing their behavior, consider changing schools to avoid daily interactions and pressure from peers.

STEP 6: MONITOR SOCIAL MEDIA OR CONSIDER A BREAK FROM ALL SOCIAL MEDIA. Monitor internet usage and website/data history.

STEP 7: BE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH DRUG ADDICTION, PTSD, DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, LOW SELF ESTEEM, AND FEELINGS OF WORTHLESSNESS DURING THE RECOVERY PROCESS. Avoid blaming your child for his/her role in the abuse. Do not use words that suggest his/her behavior caused the trauma.

STEP 8: FIND SUPPORT IN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY WITH A PEER MENTORING PROGRAM. Peer support and group therapy is helpful and sex trafficking victims can be coached to feel less like a victim and more like a resilient survivor. These interactions can foster feelings of strength and help empower youth to rebuild self-esteem and make positive choices going forward.

For urgent or life-threatening situations, or if you suspect someone is in immediate danger, call 911. It is unsafe to attempt to rescue a human trafficking victim.

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Suffolk County Sheriff