



Sex Trafficking: Identification and Response

CASA College Advo-Chat
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This topic is hard.

Please take care of yourself.

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What Is Sex Trafficking?

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Virginia's Definition of Sex Trafficking *The Code of Virginia 18.2-357.1*

Any person who solicits, invites, recruits, encourages, or otherwise causes or attempts to cause a person to engage in prostitution with the intent to receive money **or other valuable thing** or to assist another in receiving money or other valuable thing from the earnings of such person engaged in commercial sex.

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Definition Simplified

Person(s) involved using force, fraud, or coercion + Person(s) performing sexual activity + To gain something of value



Sexual activity: recent law to include manual stimulation

Something of value: money, housing, drugs, etc.

Definition Simplified: Minors

Person(s) involved using force, fraud, or coercion + Minor(s) performing sexual activity + To gain something of value



Sexual activity: recent law to include manual stimulation

Something of value: money, housing, drugs, etc.



How Does Sex Trafficking Happen in the United States?

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Types of Control

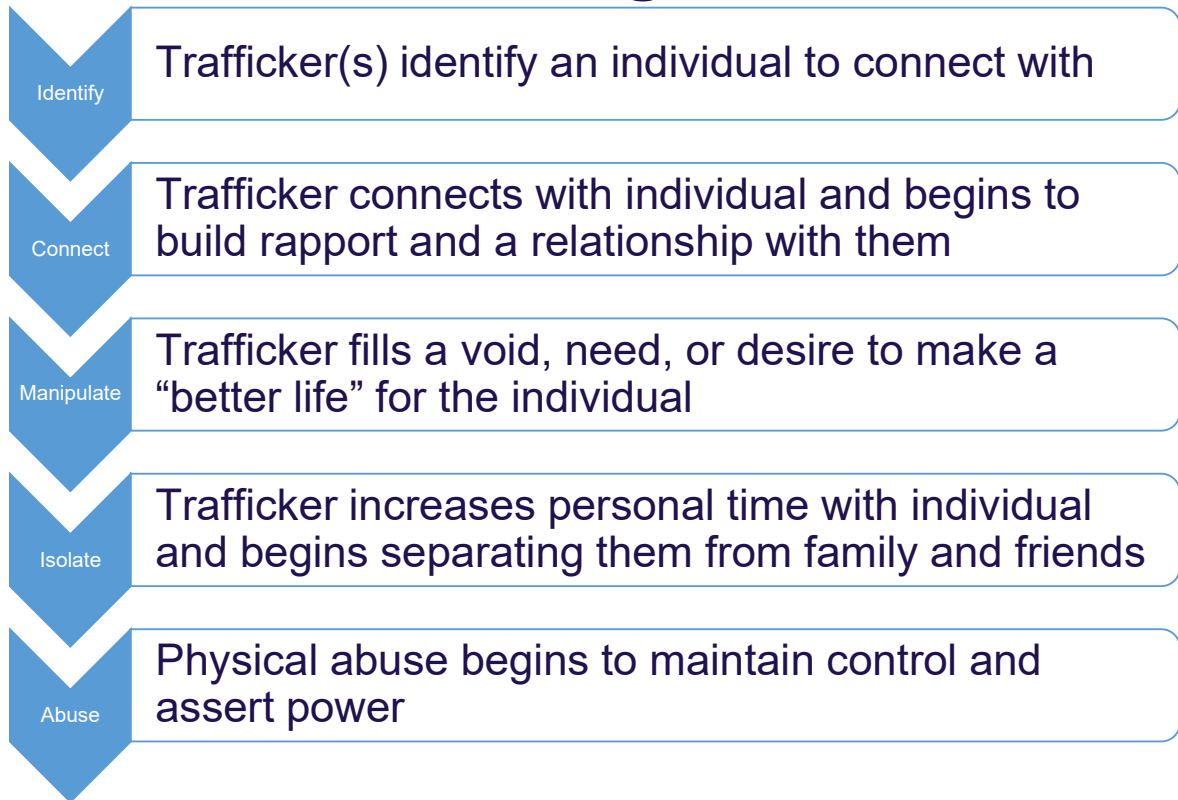
- Gang Controlled (more common in urban areas)
- Family Controlled
- Pimp / “Boyfriend” Controlled

Role of drugs:

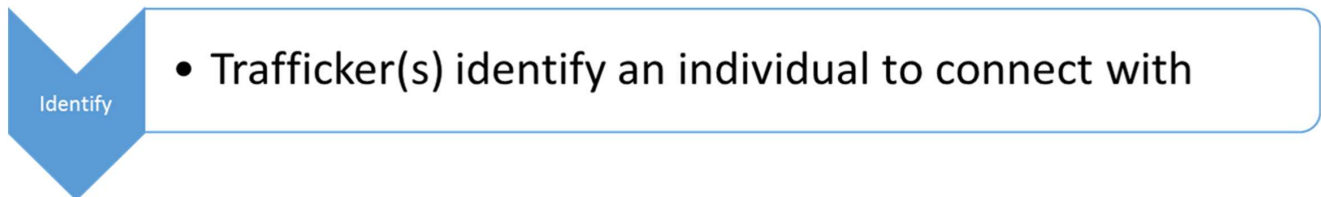
- Recruitment
- Control (reward or punishment)
- Coping mechanism

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The Grooming Process



The Grooming Process



- Introduced by friend or family
- Stranger
- Family Member



- Social Media Apps
- Texts
- Gaming Platforms
- Any technology that connects to others

The Grooming Process

Connect

- Trafficker connects with identified individual and begins to build rapport and a relationship with them



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The Grooming Process

Manipulate

- Trafficker fills a void, need, or desire to make a “better life” for the individual



- Family support
- Financial need
- Desire for romantic relationship
- Family neglect/abuse
- Foster care
- Illusion of “adulthood”
- Homelessness
- Substance abuse
- Something else.....

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The Grooming Process

Isolate

- Trafficker increases personal time with individual and begins separating individual from family and friends



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The Grooming Process

Abuse

- Physical abuse begins to maintain control and assert power



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Survivor Survey

Thorn: Released January 2018

260 survivors were surveyed

- 42% stated that they trusted their trafficker within **1 month.**
- 28% stated that they trusted their trafficker within **4 months.**

The Grooming Process Can Happen Quickly!!

Source: Thorn. 2018. *Survivor Insights: The Role of Technology in Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking*. Pg. 27. Retrieved from https://www.thorn.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Thorn_Survivor_Insights_090519.pdf.

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Trauma Bonding

"a strong emotional attachment between an abused person and his or her abuser, formed as a result of the cycle of violence." - Austin & Boyd

The brain makes associations between love and abuse

An attachment created by repeated abuse with intermittent feelings of being “saved”

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Roanoke woman gets eight years in prison for recruiting 15-year-old girl into prostitution

Laurence Hammack Jul 21, 2022 3



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3 Christiansburg massage parlors shut down for alleged illicit sexual activity

by Ashton Smith | Thursday, May 13th 2021



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West Virginia woman admits to sex trafficking child to former WV Police Chief FOR \$100



by: John Lynch

Posted: Sep 20, 2021 / 07:31 AM EDT / Updated: Sep 20, 2021 / 07:31 AM EDT

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Clayton County man charged with sex trafficking, rape of 13-year-old girl he met on gaming app Roblox

By FOX 5 Atlanta Digital Team | Published March 3, 2022 | Updated 3:27PM | Clayton County | FOX 5 Atlanta



Howard Leslie Graham was arrested on sex trafficking charges. (Clayton County Police Department)

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Indicators of Sex Trafficking

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***Human trafficking can affect
all socioeconomic statuses,
genders, races, and
ethnicities.***

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We often work with cases that are deemed child sexual abuse versus trafficking due to the complexity of these cases.

If you notice any indicators, please communicate them to the caseworker.

Higher Risk Populations

- Runaways
- Homeless Youth
- Foster Care / System Involved Youth
- Refugee Population
- LGBTQIA2S+ Population
- Familial Issues (Divorce, estranged parents, broken relationships, etc.)
- Abused (sexual, physical, and/or emotional)
- Financial Desperation
- Intergenerational Trafficking Families
- Gang Affiliated Families
- Substance Abuse

Physical & Behavioral Indicators

- Scripted answers and responses
- Not making eye contact
- Branding or Tattoos
- Behavioral Changes
- Older significant other, friends
- Unexplained change in school attendance (truancy)
- Display of expensive items, bragging about money
- Sexualized clothing, explicit on-line profile, downloading pornography, sexualized behaviors
- Parties (not age appropriate parties)
- Hanging out in unfamiliar neighborhoods or states
- New cell phone or overly attached to phone
- Gang affiliation, unhealthy friendships, crowds
- Runaway behavior, leaving home without telling their whereabouts
- Isolating from family and other support systems

Medical Indicators

- Untreated injuries from beatings and rape
- Unexplained bruises, scarring
- Reproductive health problems (exposure to STDs, fertility issues)
- Urinary Tract Infections
- Somatic complaints (headaches, chronic pain)
- Malnutrition
- Severe dental problems
- TB
- Addictions to drugs/alcohol
- Unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions
- Fatigue
- Significant weight loss

Mental Health Related Effects

- Extreme fear and anxiety
- Depression
- Inability to trust others
- Self-Harming Behaviors
- Profound shame and guilt
- Difficulty sleeping
- Difficulty concentrating
- Stress related disorders
- Panic attacks
- PTSD

Intersecting Issue: Sextortion

Please note: The following situations do not automatically indicate a human trafficking situation; however, these situations ***could potentially*** escalate into a human trafficking situation.



Source: National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. (2016). Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/a440H146I14>

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Responding to Trafficking

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Considerations

*Victims likely will not self-identify

- Do not blame or ask why statements
- Use the language they use
- Try to show concern, not fear or shock
- Honesty (If you're not sure, say that)
- Understand fear of LE and other systems
- Be mindful of power imbalance
- Provide options when possible
- Build on strengths/empower
- Don't make promises

Department of Social Services Human Trafficking Related Updates

Through legislation that was effective as of July 1, 2019

- The Department of Social Services **shall**:
 - Initiate a human trafficking assessment upon allegation and/or evidence of a juvenile trafficking situation.
- The Department of Social Services **may**:
 - Now include traffickers as the “caretaker” for the purposes of initiating a human trafficking assessment and/or investigation;
 - Hold a juvenile for up to 72 hours for safety concerns relating to a human trafficking related investigation (as deemed necessary).
- Mandated reporters **must** report suspected human trafficking situations to their local CPS hotline or to the state CPS

Department of Social Services

Human Trafficking Related Updates

Human Trafficking Assessment

(Code of Virginia § 63.2-1506.1)

- Update effective July 1, 2020:

When conducting a human trafficking assessment pursuant to this section, the local department may interview the alleged child victim or his siblings without the consent and outside the presence of such child's or siblings' parent, guardian, legal custodian, or other person standing in loco parentis, or school personnel. (§ 63.2-1506.1 (G))

Services Victims Often Need

- Therapeutic services
- Wraparound case management
- Medical, including dental and reproductive health
- Educational, technical, and/or professional skills
- Parenting resources, Childcare
- Life skills (hygiene, household, communication, etc.)
- If high level of need, residential programming
- Therapy and case management for family members

Local Trafficking Services

- Virginia Human Trafficking Resource Guide @ DCJS
- Providers throughout the state are receiving SETTS training
- Virginia's first dedicated human trafficking residential program for minors opened in 2022
- Statewide community mapping to come in 2023

Case Study

CASA Takeaways

- Know the signs and indicators
- CASA volunteers are mandated reporters
- Report any concerns to DSS – use specific language
- Be mindful of services victims may need and consider including in recommendations to the court

Questions & Discussion

Thank you!

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