



SEXUAL EXPLOITATION EDUCATION

FAMILY SECRET LESSON #11



NOTE TO PRESENTER

Log in to WalkingWise.com and refer to the Implementation Toolkit for classroom teaching tips.

Most importantly:

DEFINE SCHOOL POLICY

Establish a sexual exploitation reporting protocol with a trauma-informed response. The Walking Wise Implementation Toolkit provides a sample protocol.

AGE & AUDIENCE

This presentation can be edited by following the procedures on page 3 to align with your school policies, specific age groups, and the involvement of at-risk audiences.

SUPPORT PROCEDURE

Provide your students with guidance on how to access immediate help or arrange a private meeting with a social worker, counselor, nurse, school resource officer, or another trustworthy staff member to report concerns about themselves or a peer.

SECOND SAFE ADULT

Ensure a second trustworthy adult, such as a teacher, is present in the learning setting to observe student reactions and identify those who may benefit from a follow-up meeting. This person should remain focused and free from other duties during the presentation.

NOTE TO PRESENTER

This PDF contains the same content as the PowerPoint presentation but has been condensed into fewer pages for easier reference. For live presentations, please use the PowerPoint version. It reveals bullet points one at a time.

Meaningful learning takes time. By introducing topics gradually over several years, educators can create steady growth in awareness and understanding.

Our recommended teaching plan offers a long-term path for middle and high school students to build knowledge and confidence.



5-YEAR TRACK

PARENTS & STAFF

#1 Myths & Reality

6th GRADE

#2 Trustworthy vs. Unsafe Adult
#3 Grooming Process

7th GRADE

#4 Pornography Link
#5 Sextortion Scheme

8th GRADE

#6 Male Victims
#7 Runaways as Targets
#8 Rural Risks

9th GRADE

#9 Human Traffickers
#10 Female & Peer Recruiters

10th GRADE

#11 Family Secret
#12 Hidden Buyers

NOTE TO PRESENTER

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Walking Wise encourages the use of Slido.com, an interactive digital tool, to enhance audience engagement. For more information, contact us at support@WalkingWise.com. Once configured, integrate Slido polling and add a post-evaluation to the PowerPoint presentation.

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- Always add your organization's name or logo to each new slide.

Please delete this instruction page before presenting to audiences.



NOTE TO PRESENTER

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For revision requests, please email us at: support@WalkingWise.com.

STATISTICS

Why Study Results Can Vary

- **Some crimes are never reported, making it hard to reveal the entire issue.**
- **Studies collect information in different ways, leading to different results.**
- **Small studies may not represent everyone.**

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In this presentation, we'll discuss statistics, but it's important to note that while statistics provide valuable insights into an issue, they cannot be relied upon entirely.

Here are a few reasons:

UNREPORTED

Victims often do not report the crimes committed against them due to fear, shame, or manipulation.

INCONSISTENT COLLECTION

Geographical areas have different legal definitions for sexual crimes, which may make data hard to compare.

FOCUS GROUPS

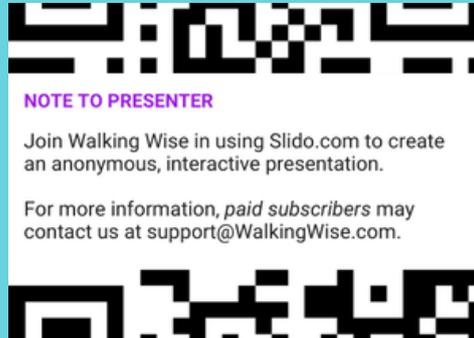
Small or specific focus groups participating in a study or survey may not accurately reflect the diversity or experiences of the broader population.

INTERACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Use Slido for Anonymous Questions

Presenter Instruction

After setting up Slido for this lesson, add the assigned access code or QR code to this slide so participants can join at Slido.com using their computers or phones.



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NOTE

For Online Interactive Polling with audiences:

Join Walking Wise in using Slido.com to create an anonymous user experience.

Contact us at support@WalkingWise.com for more information.

Upon activating Slido.com:

Determine whether the Q&A feature will be enabled. If activated, a staff member should monitor questions and comments to ensure they remain appropriate for the audience. Slido's moderation tools allow administrators to delete or hide inappropriate submissions.

SENSITIVE TOPICS WILL BE DISCUSSED

CONTENT NOTICE

We'll be discussing serious safety issues today.

Some topics may be difficult to hear.

If you ever feel uncomfortable, you can step out and speak with a trustworthy adult for support.

You're not alone—help is available.

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NOTE TO PRESENTER

Presenter Guidelines for Delivery

Present the information in a calm, matter-of-fact way and avoid sensational language.

Avoid graphic details. Focus on understanding behaviors and staying safe.

Never blame victims. Responsibility always belongs to the person who caused harm.

Maintain a steady tone. Students often mirror the presenter's emotional cues.

Do not ask students to share personal experiences.

If students laugh or react awkwardly, stay calm and continue teaching.

Always pair risk information with solutions and support.

Remind students they are not alone and help is available.

FORMS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

WALKING WISE



KNOWLEDGE serves as a powerful defense against sexual predators.

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Education is one of the strongest tools for preventing exploitation.

When young people understand how predators operate, they are better able to recognize manipulation and avoid dangerous situations.

Reinforce that awareness increases safety.

CONFRONTING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

WALKING WISE



SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

includes grooming,
sextortion, pornography
& sex trafficking.

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Sexual exploitation can include:

GROOMING

Building trust to manipulate someone.

SEXTORTION

Threatening to share private images.

PORNOGRAPHY

Involving vulnerable people in creating sexual images or videos.

SEX TRAFFICKING

Manipulating or forcing someone into sexual activity in exchange for money or something of value.

VOCABULARY



VOCABULARY

- **Predator**
- **Family Trafficker**
- **Child Abuse**
- **Child Exploitation**
- **Child Sexual Exploitation**
- **Mind Control**
- **Generational**
- **Influence**



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Understanding vocabulary terms related to the behaviors of sexual predators can empower young people to recognize warning signs of harmful situations.

Knowing terminology helps them identify manipulative tactics predators use to build trust and exploit vulnerabilities.

With this knowledge, young people are better equipped to spot red flags, understand that these behaviors are abusive, and feel more confident reporting predators to trusted adults or authorities, potentially preventing further harm.

VOCABULARY

PREDATOR

A person who injures, abuses, or takes advantage of others for personal gain or profit.



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Assisting Source

OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT [Large language model]. <https://chatgpt.com>

VOCABULARY

FAMILY TRAFFICKER

A family member who manipulates, tricks, or pressures the family's child into sexual exploitation or labor in exchange for money, housing, drugs, or favors.



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Assisting Source

OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT [Large language model]. <https://chatgpt.com>

VICTIM OF ABUSE

At what age are children most commonly trafficked by a family member?



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Allert, J. (2022). Domestic Minor Familial Sex Trafficking: A National Study of Prevalence, Characteristics, and Challenges across the Justice Process, p. 18. Institute for Shelter Care.

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Online Interactive Polling
SLIDO.com: Multiple Choice

At what age are children most commonly trafficked by a family member?

- A) 10 to 13 years old
- B) 14 to 17 years old
- C) 16 to 21 years old
- D) 18 to 21 years old

ANSWERS:

B) 14 to 17 years old is the age at which most children are trafficked by a family member.

A large 2021 study identified 917 children who were trafficked by a family member between 2018 and 2021, 72% were between the ages of 14 and 17.

-20% of the children were between 10 and 13 years old.

-6% were between the ages of 6 and 9 years old, and 1.4% were between the ages of 1 and 5, with less than 1% were infants.

Source

Allert, J. (2022). Domestic Minor Familial Sex Trafficking: A National Study of Prevalence,

Characteristics, and Challenges across the Justice Process, p. 18. Institute for Shelter Care. Retrieved March 15, 2024, from <https://instituteforsheltercare.org/familial/>

ANSWER

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is the most common age of children
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Allert, J. (2022). Domestic Minor Familial Sex Trafficking: A National Study of Prevalence, Characteristics, and Challenges across the Justice Process, p. 17.

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Message Especially for Teens:

Businesses worldwide use explainer-style animation as a training tool for their employees. So, this 3-minute Walking Wise animated video series is appropriate for both teens (ages 11+) and adults to learn how sexual predators use manipulation, intimidation, and coercion to exploit young people.

NOTE

Log in to Walking Wise.com to watch the three-minute animated video with audiences.

FAMILY VICTIMS



What percent of trafficked victims in the U.S. were exploited by a family member?



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Online Interactive Polling
SLIDO.com: Multiple Choice

What percent of victims are trafficked by a family member?

- A) ~22% of Victims
- B) ~32% of Victims
- C) ~42% of Victims
- D) ~52% of Victims

ANSWER

C) ~42% if victims were found to be trafficked by a family member.

In its 2020 report on human trafficking trends, the Polaris Project disclosed that family members were responsible for 2,448 cases, recruiting 42% of victims.

Source

Polaris Project (n.d.). Human Trafficking Trends in 2020, p. 2. PolarisProject.org. Retrieved January 24, 2026, from <https://polarisproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Human-Trafficking-Trends-in-2020-by-Polaris.pdf>

ANSWER

~42% of victims were trafficked by a family member, according to a study.

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Polaris Project (n.d.). Human Trafficking Trends in 2020, p. 2. PolarisProject.org.

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Online Interactive Polling
SLIDO.com: Multiple Choice

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RISK FACTORS



What are examples of 'harsh circumstances' that increase the risk of family trafficking?



RISK FACTORS

Childhood Risk Factors

- **Housing Instability:** Not knowing where you will live next, running away, or moving between homes often.
- **Outside Care:** Has been supported by foster care or the child welfare system.

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• Joan A. Reid, Juliana Huard & Rachael A. Haskell (2015) Family-facilitated juvenile sex trafficking, *Journal of Crime and Justice*, 38:3, 361-376.
• Allert, J. (2022). Domestic Minor Familial Sex Trafficking: A National Study of Prevalence, Characteristics, and Challenges across the Justice Process, p. 18. Institute for Shelter Care.

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RISK FACTORS

Harsh circumstances can increase a child's vulnerability to exploitation by creating unmet emotional, physical, or social needs.

Involvement in systems such as foster care or juvenile justice can reflect instability, disrupted attachments, or limited adult protection.

Running away is often a survival response to unsafe environments, rather than a choice. This may include abuse, neglect, or the misuse of drugs and alcohol in the home. Involvement in the justice system can further isolate youth from support.

Youth who experience emotional distress, disabilities, or academic challenges may be more easily manipulated by family members or caregivers who misuse power or control.

These risk factors do not cause trafficking, but they can increase susceptibility when protective supports are lacking.

Source

Joan A. Reid, Juliana Huard & Rachael A. Haskell (2015) Family-facilitated juvenile sex trafficking, *Journal of Crime and Justice*, 38:3, 361-376, DOI: 10.1080/0735648X.2014.967965 <https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/ZBS7nZCXxC3VqqUaHZ3k/full>

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RISK FACTORS

Childhood Risk Factors

- **Substance Use:** Family member misuses drugs or alcohol.
- **Legal System:** Having been arrested or involved in the juvenile justice system.
- **Incarceration:** Having a close family member in prison or who is involved in criminal activity.

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• Joan A. Reid, Juliana Huard & Rachael A. Haskell (2015) Family-facilitated juvenile sex trafficking, *Journal of Crime and Justice*, 38:3, 361-376.
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Allert, J. (2022). Domestic Minor Familial Sex Trafficking: A National Study of Prevalence,

Characteristics, and Challenges across the Justice Process, p. 21. Institute for Shelter Care. Retrieved March 15, 2024, from <https://instituteforsheltercare.org/familial/>

RISK FACTORS

Childhood Risk Factors

- **Endures Abuse:** Has experienced past physical or emotional mistreatment or neglect.
- **Pornography Exposure:** Exposed to pornography in the home.

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• Joan A. Reid, Juliana Huard & Rachael A. Haskell (2015) Family-facilitated juvenile sex trafficking, *Journal of Crime and Justice*, 38:3, 361-376.
• Allert, J. (2022). Domestic Minor Familial Sex Trafficking: A National Study of Prevalence, Characteristics, and Challenges across the Justice Process, p. 18. Institute for Shelter Care.

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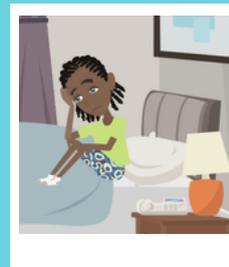
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Characteristics, and Challenges across the Justice Process, p. 21. Institute for Shelter Care. Retrieved March 15, 2024, from <https://instituteforsheltercare.org/familial/>

ABUSE VS. TRAFFICKING



How is sexual abuse by a family member different from being sex trafficked by the family?



VOCABULARY

CHILD ABUSE

Any act (or failure to act) that results in harm, potential harm, or risk of harm to a child (under 18).



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Assisting Source

OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT [Large language model]. <https://chatgpt.com>

ABUSE VS. EXPLOITATION

Forms of Child Abuse

- **Sexual Abuse:** Sexual harm for someone's control or gratification.
- **Physical Abuse:** Intentional physical harm or injury.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Harming a child's sense of safety or self-worth.
- **Neglect:** An adult's failure to provide basic needs, supervision, or protection.
- **Sexual Exploitation:** Trafficking is also a form of child abuse.

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Joan A. Reid, Juliana Huard, & Rachael A. Haskell (2015). Family-facilitated juvenile sex trafficking, Journal of Crime and Justice.

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CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse refers to actions or failures to act that cause harm or risk of harm to a child. Abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual, or take the form of neglect, and it often occurs within relationships where a child depends on an adult for care or protection.

Sexual abuse involves inappropriate sexual behavior toward a child and is driven by power and control, not consent.

These forms of abuse may occur on their own or together and can happen in any type of family or community. Abuse is never the child's fault, and many children do not disclose abuse right away due to fear, confusion, or loyalty to the abuser.

Source

Joan A. Reid, Juliana Huard & Rachael A. Haskell (2015). Family-facilitated juvenile sex trafficking, Journal of Crime and Justice, 38:3, 361-376, DOI:

10.1080/0735648X.2014.967965

<https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/ZBS7nZCXxC3VqqUaHZ3k/full>

VOCABULARY

CHILD EXPLOITATION

Involves taking advantage of a child (under 18) for personal or financial gain.



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Assisting Source

OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT [Large language model]. <https://chatgpt.com>

VOCABULARY

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The use of a child for sexual acts in exchange for something of value, such as money, drugs, food, shelter, gifts, or protection.



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Assisting Source

OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT [Large language model]. <https://chatgpt.com>

ABUSE VS. EXPLOITATION

Forms of Child Exploitation

- **Sex Trafficking:** A child is made to engage in sexual acts in exchange for something of value.
- **Grooming:** An adult builds trust to manipulate or prepare a child for abuse or exploitation.
- **Sextortion:** Threatening or blackmailing a child to obtain sexual images, videos, or acts.

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CHILD EXPLOITATION

Child exploitation occurs when a child is used for someone else's benefit, profit, or advantage.

Sexual exploitation, including sex trafficking, involves exchanging a child's sexual abuse for something of value, such as money, drugs, shelter, or protection.

Other forms of exploitation, like grooming and sextortion, rely on manipulation, threats, or coercion rather than physical force.

Exploitation often involves someone the child knows and trusts. While all exploitation is a form of abuse, exploitation involves an added element of gain for the exploiter.

ABUSE VS. EXPLOITATION

Forms of Child Exploitation

- **Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM):** Sexual images or videos of children, sometimes called child pornography.
- **Child Labor:** Forcing or manipulating a child to work in harmful, illegal, or unsafe conditions.

CHILD EXPLOITATION

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VOCABULARY

INFLUENCE

The ability to impact the actions, behavior, or opinions of others without using force or direct control.



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Assisting Source

OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT [Large language model]. <https://chatgpt.com>

VOCABULARY

MIND CONTROL

When someone influences a person's thoughts, feelings, and beliefs to control their actions.



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OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT [Large language model]. <https://chatgpt.com>

FAMILY TRAFFICKERS

Which family member is most often involved in trafficking children within their family?



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Online Interactive Polling
SLIDO.com: Multiple Choice

Which family member is most often involved in trafficking children within their family?

- A) Uncles
- B) Fathers
- C) Mothers
- D) Grandparents

ANSWER

C) Mothers - Studies show that mothers are most often the family member trafficking the children.

Mothers are the most common perpetrators of familial trafficking by a wide margin (60.29%), based on 917 cases between 2018 and 2021.

Source

Allert, J. (2022). Domestic Minor Familial Sex Trafficking: A National Study of Prevalence, Characteristics, and Challenges across the Justice Process, p. 21. Institute for Shelter Care. Retrieved March 15, 2024, from <https://instituteofsheltercare.org/familial/>

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Which family member is most often involved in trafficking children within their family?

- A) Uncles**
- B) Fathers**
- C) Mothers**
- D) Grandparents**

NOTE TO PRESENTER:

Delete this slide if you are using Slido.com for audience interaction.

MULTIPLE CHOICE: C

ANSWER

Mothers are most often the person responsible for trafficking children within the family.

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Allert, J. (2022). Domestic Minor Familial Sex Trafficking: A National Study of Prevalence, Characteristics, and Challenges across the Justice Process, p. 21. Institute for Shelter Care.

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Online Interactive Polling
SLIDO.com: Multiple Choice

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FAMILY TRAFFICKERS

Different Family Members

- **No Single Profile:** Children can be trafficked by many types of family members.
- **Immediate Family Members:** Mothers, fathers, and siblings.
- **Caregivers & Guardians:** Stepparents, adoptive parents, or foster parents.
- **Extended Family:** Uncles, aunts, grandparents, stepfamily, cousins, or other relatives.

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Allert, J. (2022). Domestic Minor Familial Sex Trafficking: A National Study of Prevalence, Characteristics, and Challenges across the Justice Process, p. 21. Institute for Shelter Care.

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FAMILY PREDATORS

Children can be trafficked by any family member, including parents, guardians, or extended relatives.

Traffickers often exploit the trust, authority, or dependence inherent in family relationships to control or manipulate a child.

Understanding that trafficking can happen within families helps clarify that exploitation is about the abuser's actions, not the child's family structure, and reinforces that the child is never at fault.

Source

Allert, J. (2022). Domestic Minor Familial Sex Trafficking: A National Study of Prevalence, Characteristics, and Challenges across the Justice Process, p. 15. Institute for Shelter Care. Retrieved March 15, 2024, from <https://instituteofsheltercare.org/familial/>

VOCABULARY

GENERATIONAL

A repeated cycle of behaviors, beliefs, or traditions passed down from parents to their children, grandchildren, and so on.



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Assisting Source

OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT [Large language model]. <https://chatgpt.com>

GENERATIONAL



How does sexual exploitation continue from one generation to the next?



GENERATIONAL

Family Behavior

- **Family Influence:** Family beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors shape what children learn to see as normal or acceptable.
- **Early Exposure:** Viewing pornography or sexual activity in the home can reduce sensitivity to abusive behavior.



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GENERATIONAL

Patterns of sexual exploitation can persist across generations when children grow up in environments where harmful behaviors are normalized or unchallenged.

Family attitudes, exposure to sexualized materials, and early experiences can influence how children understand boundaries, consent, and healthy relationships.

Recognizing these patterns helps highlight the importance of protective factors, education, and supportive adults in breaking the cycle.

GENERATIONAL

Normalized Abuse

- **Early Grooming:** Sexual abuse often starts when children are very young.
- **Manipulation:** Some children are made to believe that these experiences are common for all young people.
- **False Privilege:** They may be told they are "special" or "chosen," making the abuse seem like an honor.
- **Family Obligation:** Some are led to believe it's their duty or "chore" to help support their family financially.

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Henderson, M. F. (2022, September). Human Trafficking by Families. University of North Carolina School of Government, Public Management Bulletin, No.24, Sog.unc.edu, pp. 4,5.

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GENERATIONAL

Abusers often use grooming and manipulation to make children doubt their understanding of right and wrong.

By normalizing abuse, presenting it as special treatment, or framing it as a family obligation, traffickers create confusion and fear, which can make it difficult for young people to recognize that what is happening is illegal and harmful.

This highlights the importance of teaching children about consent, healthy boundaries, and that they are never responsible for an adult's abusive behavior.

Source

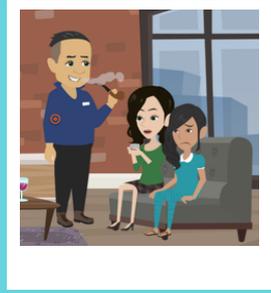
Henderson, M. F. (2022, September). Human Trafficking by Families. University of North Carolina

School of Government, Public Management Bulletin, No.24, Sog.unc.edu, pp. 4,5.

Retrieved January 25, 2026, from

https://www.sog.unc.edu/sites/default/files/reports/PMB%2024_Henderson.pdf

MIND CONTROL



What tactics might family members use to make a child cooperate with their demands?



MIND CONTROL

Misused Authority

- **Authority Figure:** Children are taught to trust and obey parents and caregivers, even when the treatment feels wrong or unsafe.
- **Threats & Fear:** Family members may use threats and punishment to enforce obedience.
- **Loss of Family:** Children may fear rejection by other family members or being kicked out of their home.

FAMILY AUTHORITY

Children have a natural tendency to trust, obey, and remain loyal to their parents and caregivers, even when those adults cause harm.

Many trafficked children fear punishment, rejection, or being removed from the family if they do not comply with demands.

Loyalty to family members, combined with dependence on them for food, shelter, and emotional support, can make it difficult for children to recognize exploitation or seek help.

In some cases, children may also believe that other family members will protect or defend the trafficker, increasing feelings of isolation and fear. These dynamics help explain why abuse and trafficking within families often remain hidden.

Source

Henderson, M. F. (2022). Human trafficking by families (Public Management Bulletin No. 24). School of Government, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Retrieved January 25, 2026, from https://www.sog.unc.edu/sites/default/files/reports/PMB%2024_Henderson.pdf

Allert, J. (2022). Domestic Minor Familial Sex Trafficking: A National Study of Prevalence, Characteristics, and Challenges across the Justice Process, p. 21. Institute for Shelter Care. Retrieved March 15, 2024, from <https://instituteforsheltercare.org/familial/>

MIND CONTROL

Use of Substances

- **Forced Use:** Family traffickers may give drugs or alcohol to children without their knowledge or force substance use.
- **Lowered Awareness:** Substances can make a child feel relaxed, numb, confused, or less able to remember what happened.
- **Withdrawal:** Substances may be withheld to cause painful withdrawal symptoms and then given as reward for cooperating.

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Henderson, M. F. (2022). Human trafficking by families (Public Management Bulletin No. 24). School of Government, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
Allert, J. (2022). Domestic Minor Familial Sex Trafficking: A National Study of Prevalence, Characteristics, and Challenges across the Justice Process, p. 21. Institute for Shelter Care

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SUBSTANCE USE

Substances are often used as a tool of control in sexual exploitation.

Family traffickers may expose children to drugs or alcohol to create dependence, reduce resistance, or impair judgment. Over time, addiction can deepen control, especially when access to substances is tied to obedience or cooperation.

This manipulation increases fear and dependence and makes it harder for victims to recognize abuse or seek help. Substance use in these situations is a result of exploitation, not a choice by the child.

Source

Henderson, M. F. (2022). Human trafficking by families (Public Management Bulletin No. 24). School of Government, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Retrieved January 25, 2026, from

https://www.sog.unc.edu/sites/default/files/reports/PMB%2024_Henderson.pdf

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UNREPORTED CRIME



What are the ways family traffickers or abusers get away with their crimes against children?



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Online Interactive Polling
SLIDO.com: Open Text

What are the ways family traffickers or abusers get away with their crimes against children?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

- Parent or Caregiver Authority
- Threatens Harm
- Seems Normal
- Isolates Victim
- Control using Drugs & Alcohol

ANSWER

Reasons for Unreported Crime

- Parent or Caregiver Authority
- Threatens Harm
- Seems Normal
- Isolates Victim
- Control using Drugs & Alcohol

Online Interactive Polling
SLIDO.com: Open Text

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POSSIBLE ANSWERS

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- Control using Drugs & Alcohol

PRESSURING PARENTS

Why might a parent feel pressured into exploiting their children?



PRESSURING PARENTS

High-Risk Situations

- **Financial Harship:** Experiencing deep poverty or a sudden financial crisis, making a caregiver feel desperate.
- **Housing Instability:** Facing eviction, homelessness, or inability to pay rent increases vulnerability.
- **Inadequate Supervision:** Leaving children unsupervised or vulnerable to those likely to sexually exploit them.
- **Coerced:** Parents controlled by a trafficker or gang members may be forced to involve their children.

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Kinnish, K., Barba, A., Blacker, D., Dierkhising, C., Garrett, R., Grady, J.B., Greenbaum, V.J., Griffin, D., Rubiales, R., Spring, G., Wozniak, J., and Child Sex Trafficking Collaborative Group. (2021). Child sex trafficking: Who is vulnerable to being trafficked? Los Angeles, CA, and Durham, NC: National Center for Child Traumatic Stress.

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HIGH RISK SITUATIONS

Research shows that poverty, lack of stable housing, and financial desperation are key risk factors that traffickers target to gain control and influence harmful behaviors, including exploitation of children.

Families under extreme financial pressure or facing housing instability may feel desperate, and debt pressure or coercion by drug traffickers can further reduce a caregiver's ability to make safe choices for their children.

Source

Kinnish, K., Barba, A., Blacker, D., Dierkhising, C., Garrett, R., Grady, J.B., Greenbaum, V.J., Griffin, D., Rubiales, R., Spring, G., Wozniak, J., and Child Sex Trafficking Collaborative Group. (2021). Child sex trafficking: Who is vulnerable to being trafficked? Los Angeles, CA, and Durham, NC: National Center for Child Traumatic Stress. Retrieved January 25, 2026, from https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/child_sex_trafficking_who_is_vulnerable_to_being_trafficked.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

REPORTING CRIME

Who is most likely to report suspected sex trafficking of a child to police?



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Online Interactive Polling
Slido.com: Multiple Choice

Who is most likely to report suspected sex trafficking of a child to police?

- A) Community Members
- B) Family Members
- C) School Staff Members
- D) Medical Staff Members

ANSWER

- A) Community Members

"[Familial trafficking] cases are more likely to be reported by anonymous community members rather than by professionals who work with vulnerable populations (such as teachers, health care providers, social workers, law enforcement officers)."

Source

Henderson, M. F. (2022, September). Human Trafficking by Families. University of North Carolina School of Government, Public Management Bulletin, No.24, Sog.unc.edu, p. 12. Retrieved March 3, 2024, from https://www.sog.unc.edu/sites/default/files/reports/PMB%2024_Henderson.pdf

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Who is most likely to report suspected sex trafficking of a child to police?

- A) Community Members**
- B) Family Members**
- C) School Staff Members**
- D) Medical Staff Members**

NOTE TO PRESENTER:

Delete this slide if you are using Slido.com for audience interaction.

MULTIPLE CHOICE: A

ANSWER

Community members are most likely to report suspicions of child sex trafficking to police.

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Emily E. Edwards, Jennifer S. Middleton, & Jennifer Cole, "Family-Controlled Trafficking in the United States: Victim Characteristics, System Response, and Case Outcomes," *Journal of Human Trafficking*, p. 12.

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Online Interactive Polling
Slido.com: Multiple Choice

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Source

1. Henderson, M. F. (2022, September). Human Trafficking by Families. University of North Carolina School of Government, Public Management Bulletin, No.24, Sog.unc.edu, p. 12. Retrieved March 3, 2024, from https://www.sog.unc.edu/sites/default/files/reports/PMB%2024_Henderson.pdf

Emily E. Edwards, Jennifer S. Middleton, & Jennifer Cole, “Family-Controlled Trafficking in the United States: Victim Characteristics, System Response, and Case Outcomes,” *Journal of Human Trafficking*, p. 12. Retrieved January 25, 2026, from <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2022.2039866>

PROTECTIVE FACTORS



What are examples of living in a healthy family environment that helps protect children from predators?



PROTECTIVE FACTORS

What Helps Keep Children Safe

- **Reliable Adults:** Surrounded by trustworthy, supportive adults.
- **Relationships:** Building strong, healthy relationships with protective family and peers.
- **Household:** Living in a home with stable routines and basic financial security.

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PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Protective factors are positive conditions in individuals, families, and communities that reduce risk and build resilience against adverse experiences like trafficking.

While protective factors can lower risk, their absence does not mean harm will occur, and their presence does not guarantee safety—exploitation can happen in any family structure.

• TRUSTWORTHY ADULTS

Sexual predators are less likely to prey upon youth who have a trusted adult to guide them.

• STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

Building strong relationships with trustworthy family members, friends, and community members can offer children a sense of belonging and support.

• ECONOMIC STABILITY

Financial stability can allow individuals to achieve their goals and provide for themselves, reducing their vulnerability to groomers and traffickers.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

What Helps Keep Children Safe

- **Good Health:** Experiences physical and emotional well-being.
- **School:** Encouraged to learn, grow, and succeed academically.
- **Safety:** Aware of the signs of unsafe or manipulative situations.

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PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Protective factors are positive conditions in individuals, families, and communities that reduce risk and build resilience against adverse experiences like trafficking.

While protective factors can lower risk, their absence does not mean harm will occur, and their presence does not guarantee safety—exploitation can happen in any family structure.

• WELL-BEING

Access to healthcare and mental health services can help individuals receive the support they need to lead a more secure life.

• EDUCATION

Access to education provides youth with the learning tools they need to develop a social and emotional skill set that can undermine traffickers' manipulative efforts.

• AWARENESS

Knowledge is often a powerful defense against sexual predators because awareness helps young people understand the warning signs of potentially dangerous situations.

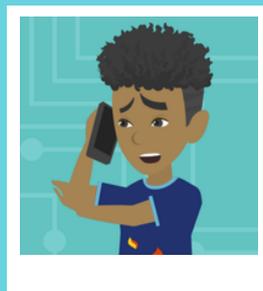
ASK FOR HELP



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ASK FOR HELP



What are ways young people can ask for help?

ASK FOR HELP

How to Ask for Help

- If you are in immediate danger, dial 911.
- If the sexual predator IS a family member, consider telling a trustworthy adult.
- If the sexual predator is NOT family, consider telling a parent.
- If you are a student in school, consider telling a trustworthy teacher, coach, school nurse, social worker, counselor, resource officer, or principal.
- To gain internet access for help, consider using a computer at your school or a public library.



24-Hour Hotline for Help

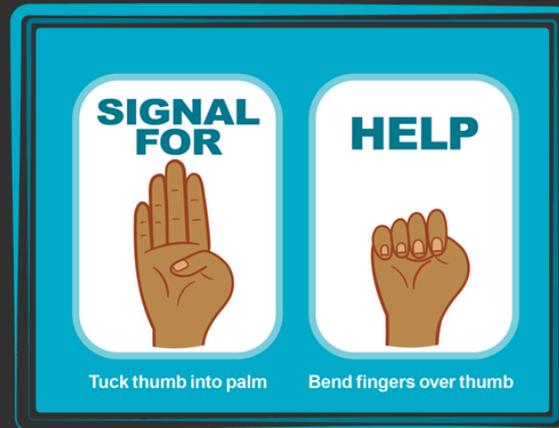
- ✓ National Human Trafficking Hotline 888-373-7888 or TEXT 233733
- ✓ Rescue America 833-599-FREE (3733)
- ✓ National Sexual Assault Hotline 800-656-HOPE (4673)
- ✓ National Center for Missing & Exploited Children 800-THE-LOST (843-5678)
- ✓ National Domestic Violence Hotline 800-799-SAFE or TEXT 88788
- ✓ National Runaway Safeline 800-RUNAWAY (786-2929)

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Presenters may ask their audience to consider adding a few "hotline for help" phone numbers in their cell phone contacts or take a photo of this slide.

HAND SIGNAL FOR HELP



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Source: Canadian Women's Foundation, April 2020

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Although the hand signal for help has not yet achieved universal recognition, it may discreetly get someone's attention in urgent situations.

SILENT

It can be used silently.

UNTRACKABLE

It leaves no digital footprint.

CONCEALED

It can be done secretly when a perpetrator is in the vicinity.

SIGNALS DISTRESS

Combining the hand signal with a distressed facial expression might help attract the attention of an individual unfamiliar with the signal's meaning.

Source

Canadian Women's Foundation, April 2020

EVALUATION



NOTE TO PRESENTER

If you would like to conduct an online student evaluation, *paid subscribers* may contact us at support@WalkingWise.com for information about using Slido.com.

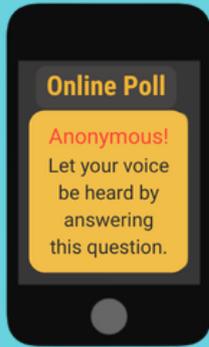
Otherwise, refer to the Walking Wise lesson plan on this topic to access a pre- and post-student survey.



Two ways to conduct a pre-/post-student evaluation:

- 1) Use the pre/post survey in the Walking Wise lesson plan for this topic.
- 2) Activate Slido.com to conduct an online survey.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS



1. How would you rate this lesson?
2. What was the one thing you liked?
3. What one thing should we improve?

slido.com
#XXXX

If using Slido: Replace "#XXXX" with your organization's custom Slido code.

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Online Interactive Polling
SLIDO.com: 3-Question Survey

IF SLIDO IS ACTIVATED:

Follow the instructions provided on WalkingWise.com to access your school or organization's custom Slido QR code and #code, which the audience will use to complete the 3-question evaluation.

Please encourage your audience to scan your organization's custom QR code to share what they enjoyed and what could be improved about the lesson.

Please send any feedback you want to share to Walking Wise at support@WalkingWise.com.

Thank you!

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To access additional resources about familial trafficking, please refer to the last page of Lesson Plan #11 on the Walking Wise EducLearning Platform.

We welcome your feedback at support@WalkingWise.com.