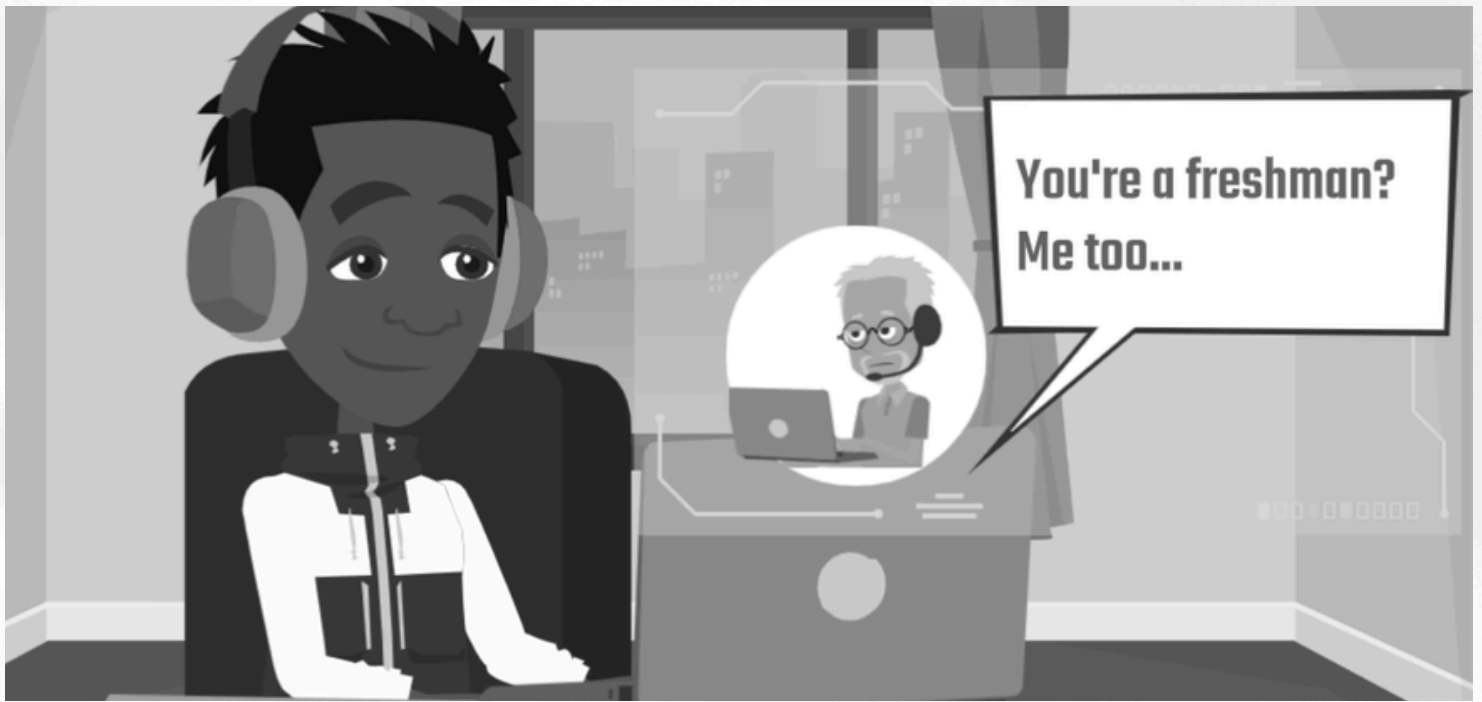




WALKING WISE: SEXUAL EXPLOITATION EDUCATION

Parents Should Know

Today's teens grow up online—where grooming, sextortion, and sexual exploitation often begin through social media, gaming, and private messaging. Many teens don't recognize the warning signs.



Walking Wise® Mission

Meaningful learning takes time. By gradually introducing Walking Wise's 12 topics over several years, parents and schools can support steady growth in awareness and understanding.



Animated Explanations

By combining storytelling with visual learning, our brief videos build skills to help young people recognize risk, evaluate trust, and know when and how to ask for help.

- Holds Attention
- Sparks Discussion
- Age Appropriate (11+)
- Trauma Informed

GROOMING

42% of victims say a predator gained their trust within one month.

PORNOGRAPHY

Most children are exposed to online pornography by age 12.

SEXTORTION

1 in 5 teens report experiencing sextortion.

MALE VICTIMS

More than 90% of sexual assaults against males are never reported.

RUNAWAYS AS TARGETS

Nearly 330,000 U.S. children go missing every year—most have run away.

RECRUITERS

Older boyfriends are the top trafficking recruiters of young girls.

PARENTS SHOULD KNOW...

Walking Wise: Sexual Exploitation Education

GROOMING: A Thorn report surveyed survivors about how quickly traffickers built trust during the grooming process. In that report, 42% of respondents said their traffickers earned their trust within one month of meeting them.

Thorn. (2018). Survivor insights: The role of technology in domestic minor sex trafficking (p. 27).

PORNOGRAPHY: A national survey shows that the average age at which children first see online pornography is around 12 years old. This comes from a survey by Common Sense Media that also found that about 15% of kids first saw online pornography by age 10 or younger.

Common Sense Media. (2022). Teens and pornography (p. 2).

SEXTORTION: Thorn's national research on sexual extortion and young people found that about 20% (1 in 5) of surveyed teens said they had experienced sextortion.

Thorn. (2025). Sexual extortion & young people: Navigating threats in digital environments (p. 1).

MALE VICTIMS: A review of research on male sexual assault victimization found that a large majority of male victims do not report the crime to law enforcement. In one study, approximately 90–95% of male sexual violations were not reported.

Pollock, S., & Hashmall, K. (2007). Male victims of sexual assault: Reporting behavior and barriers to disclosure (as cited in Male Victims of Sexual Assault: A Review of the Literature). In the U.S. National Library of Medicine, NIH.

RUNAWAYS AS TARGETS: In 2024, the FBI's NCIC database included around 330,957 reports of missing children under 18. When circumstances were recorded, most were classified as runaways, which helps explain why the total number of missing-child entries can be high even though most cases are resolved quickly.

Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2025). 2024 NCIC missing person and unidentified person statistics.

RECRUITERS: Research shows that older boyfriends or romantic partners are among the most frequently identified recruiters of youth into sex trafficking scenarios.

Authors in Gibbs, J., Rosenblatt, S., Smith, C., and others. (2023). Recruitment and entrapment pathways of minors into sex trafficking in Canada and the United States: A systematic review. Journal/Publisher info if needed.