



THE
SET ME FREE
PROJECT

READY TO STAND CURRICULUM GUIDE

Sex Trafficking Parent & Community



Our mission is to bring prevention education to youth and families to stop human trafficking before it starts.

READY TO STAND CURRICULUM GUIDE

Sex Trafficking Parent & Community : 90 Minutes

ABOUT THIS CURRICULUM:

This curriculum is designed to be open-ended, easily customizable, and flexible for students' and teachers' needs. Activities, PowerPoints, and videos should all be used to guide discussion, while allowing specific group and/or student needs and interests to lead the way.

CURRICULUM GUIDE KEY:



Suggested Stopping Point



Virtual Option



Activity



Social Media Discussion



Note to Educator



Story

ACTIVITIES:

- Value Activity
- Grooming Activity
- Safety Plan

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- \$20 bill
- Large Grooming Cards

OBJECTIVES:

- The ability to explain the concept of intrinsic value (their own and that of others).
- The ability to define the terms of human trafficking, sex trafficking, consent, and grooming.
- The ability to identify personal and societal risk factors regarding sex trafficking and the grooming process.
- The ability to identify social media as a risk factor, as well as a primary method of recruitment and grooming for sex trafficking.

Slide 1 - Introduction

Introduce yourself as a speaker with The Set Me Free Project.

Gauge their mood and comfort level to decide how to begin and set the stage. Lay the foundation for the work the group will be doing over the next few sessions.

The **mission** of The Set Me Free Project: *To bring prevention education to youth and families to stop trafficking before it starts.*

Our goal and our hope is that everything we will talk about will help them to stay safe and healthy in every way. We want them to be educated about human trafficking; and as safe as possible from ever becoming a victim of human trafficking.

We are here to have a conversation. We are here to talk about “real life stuff” and YOU are in a safe space to be open.

You may choose to keep it simple and go around the group with traditional introductions, or if you feel the group would benefit from something different, feel free to lead the group in some ice breaking activities.

Say: The Set Me Free Project will talk to anybody and everybody who wants us to come in and present. We are in schools and communities throughout the state of Nebraska and Iowa with reach in South Dakota, Kansas, and Illinois.



Our presentations for youth begin in 3rd grade and go through college age. We also speak to adults in every facet, communities, specific businesses, educators, and of course, parents. Now, in 3rd grade we certainly don't talk about human trafficking per se, however we do talk about digital safety, responsibility, and what it means to be a good, empathetic person.

We have a lot of information for you on our website, so I encourage you to look at the resources, and we keep things updated so check back periodically. We want to be a consistent resource for you. We want this to be as interactive as possible, so don't hesitate to ask questions or comment. Please keep in mind that this presentation is designed for adults. We are available with a separate and age appropriate presentation for your kiddos.

Slide 2 - Take Care of You

Tell the audience you want to preface the presentation with a trigger warning and a take care of you due to the nature of the topic. Encourage the audience to take a personal break from the presentation if they need to just step away for a minute (bathroom break, water break, etc.) and that it won't hurt your feelings. Urge them to come back, however, because the information is critically important.

Slide 3 - Video: Dental Monitor Commercial

Before the video: Reference back to the fact that we teach prevention education. Tell the audience there is a difference between awareness and prevention then introduce the commercial.

After the video: Ask, "Was that awareness or prevention?" Inform them that we want to give people the tools to prevent trafficking (what a trafficker looks like, warning signs to understand, luring tactics, etc.) to prevent it from happening.

Say: "Awareness would be me coming here today and telling you all that 'Trafficking exists, it's happening in our state, and it's really scary! Okay, bye. Good luck.' We want to make sure we're giving you tips and tools on how to prevent it, stop it, and recognize the signs."

Slide 4: Value

Say: We're going to do something we do with the kids. I'm going to ask you to be eight graders for a moment for me. For some of you that may be easier than others.



Hold up a \$20 bill.

Ask: Who wants \$20? Allow them time to raise their hands and for each question allow time for answers. Have fun with it.

Say: Great! What if I fold it in a little square? Do you still want it? What if I crumble it into a tiny little ball, do you still want it? So what if I spit on it? Do you still want it? What if I throw it on the ground and step on it? Do you still want it? What if I call it dirty and disgusting names? Do you still want it? And what if I rip it? How about now?

Yes! You still want it, but why? Allow answers.

Say: The \$20 bill still has value! And that is exactly what our kids need to understand. This is the foundation of everything we talk about. And this is the foundation of what our kids need to know. They have an intrinsic value that does not change. It doesn't matter who they are, it doesn't matter where they live, it doesn't matter who their mom and dad are, it doesn't matter how much money they have or how much money they don't have, it doesn't matter how many likes they have on social media or how many followers they have. It doesn't matter. They have an intrinsic value that does not change no matter what happens to them, or what they do. Our kids need to understand they have value and human dignity and there is nothing that can change that.

Slide 5 - What is Human Trafficking

Ask the audience to define human trafficking. Then ask what they think human trafficking looks like in the world, in their state, and in their community.

Define human trafficking (animate definition): The buying and selling of a human being for the personal profit and gain of another through FORCE, FRAUD, or COERCION. So what does that really mean? Let's talk about the words force, fraud, and coercion.

Slide 6 - Force, Fraud, and Coercion

Ask: What is Force? Allow a handful of answers.

Say: Force is physically making someone do something against their will. When we think of human trafficking we immediately think of the white creepy van or being kidnapped, being assaulted or even the movie "Taken." And although that can, however, that's not what happens most often, especially here in state.

What we see more often is fraud.

Ask: What is Fraud? Allow a handful of answers

Say: Fraud is deceit or deception; fake job offers, fake relationships, someone pretending to be something they are not; making false promises or using trickery. This is the one more often used. This could be someone telling you you're beautiful or that they love you all while knowing that they intend to use you later to get money. Or offering a job that seems legit but later they don't pay you. Oftentimes we don't know their true intent until it's too late. In a fake relationship the person could be exactly who they say they are. The part that is fake, is the love. Sometimes these friendships or relationships start in person, but often they begin online.

Ask: What is Coercion? Allow a handful of answers

Say: Coercion is mental and emotional manipulation; using affection or intimidation to gain compliance or even blackmail. This could look like: If you don't do what I tell you to do it's going to happen to your little brother or sister. If you don't do what I tell you I know where your family lives and I'll hurt them.

Again this can happen face to face and online. A common tactic is internet best friend or internet dating. Think about how someone might invite you to share nudes and then use those nudes against you to blackmail you into doing what they want.

People often ask why human trafficking happens. And to answer that I'll let you finish this statement: The root of all kinds of evil is (allow answers), the love of money.

Say: This is a business first. Not a good business, but a business nonetheless. And in business you have to have three things, a buyer, a seller and a product. In this case the product is...(allow answers), humans. So let's be clear this is a business where the money is blood money. Also know that it doesn't have to just be cash it can be an exchange of anything of value. It can be a place to stay, media, drugs, food, etc.



Note to Educator: Each state has different laws. For example, in Nebraska, the law states it only takes two: the buyer, the seller, seller and the victim.

It's also important to understand that any form of self trafficking that a minor does is still considered sex trafficking.



Note to Educator: For minors that have experienced of Sexual exploitation or C-SEC (Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children) they are legally considered victims of sex trafficking. Force, fraud, or coercion does not have to be proven. If the person is not a minor, it is necessary to prove force, fraud, or coercion in order to convict a trafficker for sex trafficking.

Ask, rhetorically: If fraud and coercion are more prevalent in human trafficking, why do we hear about the force scenarios in the news, movies, and social media more often?



Story: Shannon, 12 years old, is on her way home from school one day when a white creepy van pulls beside her and kidnaps her. What do we, as a society, do? We're going to start looking for Shannon immediately. We are going to put up missing posters, put in safety measures for our youth, we might organize a search party, put up billboards, and eventually, this story might make national news. Who do we blame for Shannon's disappearance? We blame the perpetrator. But let's imagine that Sonia, same age, is in a relationship with someone that people might consider a bad influence. Sonia is from a troubled home life and gets into trouble quite a bit. Sonia, after being groomed by this person; telling her he loves her, no one will love her like he will, and let's go make a life for ourselves. Sonia decides to leave with him. What do we, as a society do? There probably are no missing posters, no safety measures, no search party, no billboards, and no news. Who do we blame for Sonia's disappearance? We blame Sonia, the victim. Because of our emotional connection to the seemingly "innocent" scenario 1, the news, movies and social media capitalize on what we'll pay attention to. But make no mistake, Sonia is just as innocent. Sonia did not "ask for it". Sonia deserves just as much help.



Social Media Discussion: So, if it's not about kidnapping, how are people who have harmful intentions preying on their victims? Wait for answers.

It's about relationship building. Traffickers want to build relationships with us so it becomes a relationship of "trust."

What do you think is one of the most common ways traffickers find and start to build relationships with those they want to build relationships with? Wait for answers.

Yes! Social media. When we have access to the world, the world also has access to us. People who want to do us harm often use social media to not only target us, but also build relationships through social media. Throughout our time together we're going to discuss how they do that.

Slide 7 - Video: New Facts

Discuss the video

Slide 8 - Types Of Human Trafficking

Say: There are two common types of human trafficking here in the Midwest that we focus on. Discuss the types of human trafficking.

Discuss sex trafficking. Sex trafficking looks like prostitution and pornography and is the number one form of trafficking of which youth are at risk. When we are looking at minors involved in commercial sex, force, fraud, or coercion do not have to be proven.

When we are talking about adults, on a federal level, force, fraud, OR coercion must be proven to convict on sex trafficking. When we are talking about minors, any commercial sex is considered sex trafficking.



Sex trafficking can be recruited and the crime committed online and in person.

Discuss labor trafficking. Labor trafficking can be in the form of domestic, agricultural, or any type of working servitude. Because minors can legally hold jobs, force, fraud, or coercion does have to be proven to confirm labor trafficking.

- Bonded Labor - when there is a debt tied to the labor.
- Forced Labor - Literal physical force by means of physical harm
- Child Labor - and exploitation of a minor enduring any form of work that deprives them of their childhood, interferes with their ability to attend regular school, and is mentally, physically, socially or morally harmful.

Both types of trafficking can span across all ages and all people.

AND MORE...There are also other types of trafficking such as organ harvesting, child soldiers and child brides. We don't see those as often here in the Midwest. We won't touch on those today for time sake, but those are great opportunities for research.



Note to Educator: Let the audience know this: "We have a labor trafficking presentation as well, just FYI." LABOR TRAFFICKING PRESENTATION COMING SPRING 2021.



Note to Educator: We only acknowledge these other forms of trafficking. We don't have time to discuss the rest.

From an Educator: When I mention infants and seniors being sold for sex, I get a lot of dropped jaws. It is very important to explain that yes, it is "gross (word students use)" to think someone selling and buying a grandma, but it is also just as "gross" for someone to buy sex from someone who is in their 20's. It is someone dehumanizing a human being, and treating them like a product.

Slide 9 - Global Illegal Industries

Tell the audience that human trafficking brings in an estimated \$150 billion dollars per year, worldwide. Discuss how this is only second to drug trafficking but it is thought that human trafficking will surpass drug trafficking.

Ask: "Why do you think that is? Why would human trafficking become more profitable?" Allow time for answers.

Talk about how drugs can only be sold once then the trafficker has to get more product while, when a person is the product, that same person can be sold dozens, hundreds, thousands of times.



Note to Educator: This discussion of drugs being a product that can be depleted and a person can be sold over and over, is only shared in adult presentations, never youth presentations. Educators are advised to use discretion with the audience, as to not use this statement for shock value, fear mongering or a motivation for anyone with ill intent. This information is only shared to help the audience understand why human trafficking is so pervasive and so profitable. Omit this part of the discussion at your discretion.

Slide 10 - Are We Looking For The Wrong Things?

Discuss the hype around human trafficking and what people believe it is. Give examples you've seen on social media (such as zip ties on cars so traffickers can kidnap people, a victim needing to be taken to another country for it to be sex trafficking, etc.).

Say: When we believe these stereotypes and falsities, we are creating a false narrative of what sex trafficking really is. We want you to have all the right education to be as safe as you can. I'm going to test you now and see what you think are facts or myths about sex trafficking.

Slide 11 - Myth Activity

FACT: As many as 50% of individuals being trafficked for sex are male.

One study estimates that as many as half of sex trafficking victims and survivors are male. Advocates believe that percentage may be even higher but that male victims are far less likely to be identified. LGBTQ+ boys and young men are seen as particularly vulnerable to trafficking.

Slide 12 - Myth Activity

MYTH: Individuals who are trafficked will be desperate to escape their trafficker and will ask for help when they need it.

Individuals who experience trafficking may not readily seek help due to a number of factors, including shame, self-blame, fear, or even specific instructions from their traffickers regarding how to behave when interacting with others. They do not always self-identify and may not realize that they have rights.

Slide 13 - Myth Activity

MYTH: If someone has consented to their initial situation, it is not considered trafficking.

Initial consent to commercial sex or labor before the trafficker used force, fraud, or coercion is not relevant.



Slide 14 - Myth Activity

FACT: Human trafficking and Human smuggling are not the same things.

Human smuggling and human trafficking are distinct crimes under federal law. Human smuggling refers to an illegal border crossing, while human trafficking involves commercial sex acts or labor services that are induced through force, fraud, or coercion, regardless of whether or not transportation occurs.

Slide 15 - Myth Activity

FACT: A person can be trafficked from their home or school.

Trafficking can happen to someone anywhere. A person can be living at home and going to school and still be sold by their trafficker after school. There are so many stories about familial trafficking. Mom sold her daughter on the weekend to make rent money. Uncle sold his nephew when he came to stay with him for drugs. We also have more stories than I can tell you about students being sold at school for a ride or at the football game by their peers or in some cases the school staff. It does not have to be something ongoing nor does it have to be a dark basement with a held captive for it to be trafficking. Trafficking happens right in front of us.

Slide 16 - Myth Activity

MYTH: Most recruiting happens along gas stations or truck stops along major highways or Interstates.

45% meet their traffickers in person at parties, malls, schools, and other locations, and 55% meet their traffickers via text website or app.

Slide 17 - Trafficker Faces

Imagine you are in a grocery store and you see the next 8 people walk by, see if you can pick out the trafficker.

Faces of a trafficker - which one do you think is the trafficker? Stories of each in about three sentences roughly, focusing on the luring tactics of building trust or using trust.

Say: What do they have in common? Nothing, except they all build relationships with their victims to exploit (i.e. they all knew their victims).

How many white creepy vans did you hear about in these stories? How many were initially assaulted vs. how many had some sort of trust first?

The next time you think of what a human trafficker looks like I want you to remember these faces. Remember that these are just people. They come in all races, genders, ages, professions or relationships and their luring tactics are almost always building trust. So it can be someone who seems like a friend or takes advantage of your family relationship or the couple next door who helped you.

Slide 18 - Who is the Trafficker?

52% of all recruiters are male, 42% are female, and 6% are couples.

Talk about how shocking this statistic is to most people. Relate it back to the trafficker stereotype and talk about how people often don't think of a female being able to do something like this because females are "nice" and "kind" and "nurturing" but traffickers can be anyone. In fact, female traffickers may use this perception as a tactic. People feel more comfortable with them, so that relationship may build quicker. It's important to recognize our skewed perceptions, so that we're not only looking for the wrong things.

Slide 19 - Vulnerabilities

These are just SOME of the vulnerabilities that traffickers look for. Read each one including vulnerable populations. Highlight two or three and discuss how traffickers may identify that vulnerability and then use that against a person. Talk through these as you would their children.

- **Poverty:** Act as a trafficker and look at the audience while saying "We've been together a while now. And I just think you are so amazing. I know you haven't had a lot in your life and I think you deserve the world. I want to take you on a shopping spree and let you buy whatever you want. This is how much I love you.
- **Feeling Rejected** - Act as a trafficker and look at the audience while saying "You are the most amazing person I've ever met. I can't believe you are all mine. Everyone else has been missing out. You have the most gorgeous eyes. I understand you better than anyone else. I'm so sorry you're having struggles at home, I'll protect you. Whenever you're ready let me know." So the next time they get into a fight with you, who do you go to?

- Running Away – If you feel that you need to get away from an unsafe situation, what can you do? Discuss: *If your best friend tells you that they can't handle it anymore and they are going to run away, what are you going to say to them? What is a healthier method than running away?
- Drugs/Alcohol – Can seem like a good way to “escape”, but when we're under the influence nobody makes good choices – what are other ways to destress? People may do drugs/alcohol to try and escape. They may also feel peer pressured into using. Discuss healthy ways to combat stressful situations. Say:

We cannot control all of our vulnerabilities. The average age at which people begin to be trafficked is their teens or younger. Can a person change their age? Obviously, not. So, this isn't about changing the vulnerabilities, necessarily, but knowing what they are so you can recognize possible things people who want to harm you might use to their advantage.

Slide 20 - Grooming Video

Before the video say: We are going to watch a video. Watch for what vulnerabilities were preyed upon. Also watch the process of grooming this person unfolds. We'll talk about the grooming process after the video with this story in mind.

Slide 21: The Stages of Grooming

Discuss the grooming process. After a video, define grooming, then discuss the steps of the grooming process in relation to the video. Mention that it is a process that can take years, months, weeks or even in some cases just days. At this time you can link social media safety to human trafficking. We know that because it's not about kidnapping but relationship building, it is critical to understand the grooming process and how it works.



Note to Educator: The story below can be told in lieu of the video, or just as an additional way to drive the grooming process home.



Shayla was an 8th grade girl at a local school that LOVED to be on social media. Her favorite app was Instagram. She would post all of the time, you know, the things 8th graders post. Now, Shayla loved to go to a place called Skatedaze. Skatedaze, now closed, had it all. Laser tag, go karts, and of course, roller skating. Shayla loved to roller skate.

Shayla would post on social media, "Hey guys, I'm going to Skatedaze tonight, who wants to go with me?" Or, "Hey guys, I just got these new pink skates! Come and break them in with me!"

What Shayla didn't know was that she was being followed on Instagram by a guy named Cole. Now Cole was older, in his early 20's, and Cole just watched her on Instagram for awhile. One day, Shayla was at Starbucks, and what do you know, Cole walked in.

He looked at Shayla and said, "Hey, I know you."

She looked up and didn't recognize him, "Nope, I don't think so."

"Yeah," he said, "you go to Skatedaze, right?"

"Oh, yeah, I do!" she said.

"In fact," he said, "you just bought those new pink skates, right?"

"Oh my gosh! Yes!" she said! "I did get new pink skates!"

"Yeah, I saw you in them. By the way, your butt looked pretty good in those jeans you were wearing."

Shayla smiled and really liked his comment.

They quickly exchanged phone numbers and Snaps and started texting regularly. Shayla found out she got tickets to Katy Perry! She was so excited! She immediately posted on Instagram how excited she was to go to the Katy Perry concert.

The night of the concert came and, what do you know, Cole was at the Katy Perry concert! They connected at the concert and then they started dating. They dated for about a year and Cole said all the right things.

After a while, all the nice things turned into controlling behavior and insults. "Hey! You text me back when I text you!" "And you know your friends that used to be around all the time? Have you noticed they're not around? That's because I'm the only one who can stand to be around you. I'm the only one who loves you." "And your parents? They are so controlling! I would never treat you like that. You are so lucky to have me."

Shayla loved Cole, but over time he was eating away at her self-esteem and confidence. One day, Cole stopped by Shayla's school and said, "Hi, I'm here to pick up Shayla. I'm her dad and she has a dentist appointment." Shayla came bouncing down the hall saying, "Hi, Daddy!" Cole took her out of school and sold her over and over again. He continued to do so and maintained control.



Large group activity: Use the large grooming cards and ask for 6 volunteers. Have the volunteers stand in front of the class and give them each a card, out of order, of the stages of grooming. Then have the class put them in the order of the stages of grooming. Share the correct order with the group when they have it right.

Stage 1: They target you

Stage 2: They gain your trust

Stage 3: They fill a need

Stage 4: They isolate you

Stage 5: They sexualize you

Stage 6: They maintain control

All of these stages of grooming can be online or in person.

The grooming process can start and end online just as easily as it can start and end face to face. Whether someone initially meets that person online or later interacts online or is being sold online, Social media has a significant place in the grooming process today.



Virtual Option: On a Zoom call, separate the class in breakout rooms. Make sure they already have an out of order list of the stages of grooming. Pop in and out of each breakout room to see their progress. When everyone comes back, have each group share what their guess to the order of the stages of grooming. Share the correct order with the group.

Slide 22: Consent

Ask the audience what they think consent is, and what it looks like in a relationship.

Say: Teaching consent to youth can be done in a variety of ways, and teaching consent doesn't always have to be in the form of a long sit-down discussion about consent (although those discussions are important, too). In fact, teaching consent is an ongoing process in which different scenarios come up as children grow and learn, and each scenario presents its own questions about the rules of consent. In general, there are a few rules that you can discuss with kids that can help them understand the basics of consent and help them react appropriately when faced with new situations. Trust, like consent, is not indefinite. Someone can lose trust. What are those things?

And trust isn't equal. For example you might trust me to stand here and share this information, you might even say hello and chat with me in a public place if you see me again but does that mean you trust me enough to have your 8 year old sleep over at my house all alone?

Slide 23: Consent

Teach kids to ask permission before touching their friends.

Kids need to understand that consent goes both ways. Just as they are able to say yes and no, so are their friends. Teach them that they can take photos of their friends, and that's okay, but they do have to ask permission in order to post the photo. They need to ask their friends' permission for everything as well.

Never force a child to hug, touch, or kiss anyone.

This can be difficult as a parent because our kids are precious and there are a lot of well intentioned family members that want to hug and squeeze our kiddos. That's understandable. But if our kids are even remotely uncomfortable with that, we have to honor that. If we force them to hug a grandma, sit on Santa's lap or whatever it may be, we are teaching them that they don't get to say "no" to someone touching them in a way that makes them uncomfortable. Whether that touch is good or bad, we have to teach them it's okay to say no.

Help create empathy within your child.

We want our kids to have empathy and compassion, but that doesn't necessarily come naturally. We have all seen toddlers not want to share. So, we must teach our kids to care about others, have empathy, and treat people with respect. That has to be modeled more than taught. As we teach people with dignity and value, our kids will see that in us and want to do the same.

Teach kids that "no" and "stop" are important words and should be honored. Teaching kids that no and stop are words that we don't mess around with. A mom shared that her kids would often play the tickle game. Big brother would tickle little sister and it was always fun and respectful. But sometimes little sister would yell "no" and "stop" for fun, not really wanting big brother to stop.

Mom, however, would step and say, “no was said, now you stop.” She would then explain, say no and stop when you mean it and those words must always be honored. Give kids the ability to say yes or no. Allow your children choices with the ability to say yes or no. This will teach them that they get to choose during some of those key times.

Allow children to talk about their body in anyway they want without shame.

Our children must learn that their body is not a bad or embarrassing thing. It’s a part of who they are and that’s amazing. Often parents will use cutesie words to describe “private parts.” This is never a good idea. Teach your kids the correct terms for their genitals and body parts. It’s a safety issue. If a child is sexually abused and their parents have taught them that their private parts are called a “ding dong,” and they disclose to a safe adult saying my grandpa touched my ding dong, it makes it that much harder to know exactly what the child means and makes it that much harder to prove sexual abuse.

Always model consent.

Our kids learn from us before they learn from others and although teens have additional outside influences their strongest perception of the world starts at home. Show them what consent looks like. As often as you can. Teach them how you and your significant other consent to hugs.

Slide 24 – Who Is A Trustworthy Person?

Say: We used to teach youth all about stranger danger. That they need to be careful around strangers and what to do if they encounter one. For example, we teach them not to take candy from strangers, or not to talk to a stranger at all, or not to ever get into a white van. But there was a problem with stranger danger, it wasn’t, and isn’t, the strangers who are harming our youth. It’s people they know. In fact, the majority of people who are doing our children harm; traffickers, molesters, etc., are typically not strangers but people they know. So we have to teach our children that it’s not about stranger danger, but about who a trustworthy person is. And we must remember that for some of these kids their parents, their grandparents are not trustworthy.

Say: It's important we know who we can trust. There are four characteristics that differentiate a trustworthy person from a non-trustworthy person.

1. A trustworthy person will never ask you to do something illegal.
2. A trustworthy person will never ask you to something that goes against your moral compass.
3. A trustworthy person will never ask you to keep a secret from your parents or guardians.
4. A trustworthy person always wants the best for you.

Apply this to adults and their peers: are they being a trustworthy friend and do you have trustworthy friends? Teach our kids to be advocates for each other. And model that for them. Be a trustworthy friend.

Slide 25: Social Media

Say: What's the truth behind social media and human trafficking?

Ask: What are some ways you have heard of traffickers reaching their targets through social media? Discuss a few answers.

Say: Most often our students will talk about the random guy from another country with one photo who added them on social media or asked for an inappropriate pic right away. Could this lead to a trafficking situation? Sure. I think we can all agree their intentions of the random guy are not pure. However, considering what we've talked about today, we as parents and community members want help educate our youth on the grooming process and traffickers building trust. Let's talk about how they do that.

Discuss how something innocent our kids post, or even what we post, can be just the information a predator is looking for.

Slide 26: Intention vs. Risk Post 1

Say: This real post shows a girl who is talking about how she tried to be honest with her mom and tell her about her fun Friday night plans to attend a rave. Mom didn't want her to go, so she says that she is going anyway, do what she wants, and have a fun night with no regrets.

Ask: What is the intention of this girl? Answer: Her intention is to express herself, show that she is independent and “grown”

Ask: What is the unintended risk here? Answer: If I'm looking at this as a person who is trying to do harm, I'm going to recognize that she is trying to be in charge of herself a little more than maybe she's ready. I can see that she is somebody who's a risk taker and not a rule follower. I can tell where she's going to be and I can go build a relationship with her and give her sympathy.

Slide 27: Intention vs. Risk Post 2

Say: This is an Instagram account that shows her bio, and with this information we can tell a lot about who this student is.

Ask: What is the intention of this girl? Answer: Self Expression.

Ask: What is the unintended risk here? Answer: As someone who wanted to do harm, could go through all of this information on her profile and become a part of this student's life. Add her on Instagram and then add her on Snapchat because she shared her Snapchat username. When kids are posting, they are not posting it because they want to become a victim, what they are doing is trying to express themselves. So, it's important to have that conversation with your child and work with them to keep their bio information general. Because on Instagram their bio is always public even if they have a private account.

Slide 28: Intention vs. Risk Post 3

Say: This is a post from a mom on the first day of school.

Ask: What is the intention here? Answer: You want to show off how big your kids have grown, document their first day of school etc.

Ask: What is the unintended risk here? Answer: It seems pretty benign, It's just an innocent picture for the first day of school documenting a milestone. And of course where do we most likely take that picture? In front of the house! We can tell a lot of information from this one post.

There may not be a lot of identifying markers in the background, but we can see what elementary school the child is going to, we cut off the house number in the picture, I can guess at the students age, now I have a photo to see if I can find her on social media and mention a few things to her, about her that I have gathered from your photo. I'm not going to go and kidnap little Susie, I'm going to build a relationship with her with information you gave me through your social media page.

When kids are posting, they are not posting it because they want to become a victim, what they are doing is trying to express themselves. So, it's important to have that conversation with your child and work with them to keep their bio information general. Because on Instagram their bio is always public even if they have a private account. Our kiddos are not posting pictures of their food and puppies like we might. They are posting their deep dark feelings, painful thoughts, and even suicidality. They often have a secret/fake Instagram account called a Sinsta or Finsta, and the same with Snapchat. Here they are posting that they wouldn't want family members to see.

Slide 29 - Are you READY?

Are you ready to stop trafficking before it starts? Are you ready to be safe online?

R- Report anything dangerous

Report anything that someone else does to make you uncomfortable, feel bad, or anything that feels dangerous. Trust your instincts.

E- End the communication

Stop talking or responding to them. Block them on social media.

A- Ask for help

Tell someone you need help. Go to a trustworthy adult and let them help you. You're not alone.

D- Don't engage

You don't even have to put energy into it. Its not about just stopping the communication, it's also about stopping your part in playing the game.

Y- Your safety first

Always be looking out for yourself. Your safety comes first.

Slide 30 - Potential Trafficking Warning Signs

Say: Each of these are possible signs of someone who has been trafficked. We don't want to use this as a checklist more as a guide. Trafficking can look very different for each individual. The best way to spot it is to know your friends and family and know when there has been a change in behavior, clothing, mood, work hours. Etc. The number one way to prevent human trafficking is to build relationships. Traffickers build excellent relationships, we need to build better ones. Traffickers create strong networks, we need to have stronger ones.

Keep in mind that most people in a trafficked situation, don't self-identify as having been trafficked. And most survivors know their traffickers before they were trafficked. and are unlikely to think of that known person as a trafficker.

Slide 31 - What's your Safety Plan?

As parents, grandparents, as a support system to our kids do WE engage them in their own safety plan? Or do we make all the decisions for them? Sure in the early years we do most of the deciding. But are there ways we can get them to make the decisions? As they get older do we adjust that safety plan and allow them more opportunity to create their own?

The more we can give them decisions in how they will be safe online and in real life, the more that they will buy into it. The more it will stick. The more they will be likely to actually use it! Here are the key pieces of a quick safety plan.

Strengths: What are their strengths or protective factors that they can lean into when something feels off or is outright dangerous? Ex: Strong support system, ability to ask for help, having positive influences around them, strong willed?

Warning Signs: What will they be particularly cautious of? What things overtly and more subtly make them slow down, investigate further, consider advice from trusted adults?

Personal Action Steps: What are they willing to do to mitigate risk? How can they put on their "online seatbelt". Ex: Private Accounts. Never posting where they are. Simple quotes on their bios? Having a virtual buddy system: Someone always know where they are, who they are with and when they will leave. Asking for help the moment something feels funny. Having a family code word.

Trustworthy People: Who has proven to be trustworthy? This is a different question than who do they trust. Who has earned it and why? And be ok that you might not be on the list, teenagers tend to not like their parents. And that's ok, if you also have found the people on their list trustworthy. Maybe it's an aunt, a pastor, a school counselor, or their therapist.

Other Resources: What are some other resources they can turn to for help? Maybe a hotline or website. Maybe learning more about a specific topic. Maybe knowing how to access help without a phone.

Help them create a safety plan and review it often.

Slide 32 - Be Real. Stay Cool

Always be approachable.

As hard as it might be to keep your cool when you discover your kids are not being the most responsible with their choices, it's important that parents be approachable so their kids can ask for help, will open up and will be considered a resource for the youth. If they are asking you, they need you. Be there!

Do your best not to react.

And when they tell you that thing that makes us want to explode, at that moment, we have to do our best not to react. When we can respond with no judgement, with no reaction, and a response of "thank you for sharing," our kids will continue to tell us things when they need our help. It's not to say that there won't be consequences for certain actions, but at that initial moment when they are sharing something that's hard for them to share, we need to make sure we don't react negatively.

Help children understand consent.

Teach our kids consent from the earliest age of sitting on Santa's lap, not having to hug a family member, having the ability to say: "No I don't want that picture posted of me." And many other ways they can say "no." The more they practice saying no when they are not comfortable the better they will be when a tough situation arises.

Know where your children are in the real world and in the cyber world.

It's important to know where our kids are, whether online or in person. This is when it's a good idea to have certain tools in place. Random media checks are very important to make sure we know what our kids are doing on their media.

It might feel like an invasion of privacy to you or to them. But remember, everywhere they have access to the world, the world has access to them. Would you let your 5-year old stand in the middle of pornographic production set? Or your 15-year old go over to their 20 something boyfriend or girlfriend's house? No. The same is true for online interactions.

And a little tip: Have a place where you collect all media at night and have a family charging station. It could be in your bedroom, it could be in your kitchen, or anywhere that your kids won't have access to it at night. We talk about what apps are stealing our kids' sleep, and sometimes they need an excuse to not be on social media at night.

Slide 33: Responding

Memories can be random and stories can change.

Remember that if a trauma event occurred, memories can be random and not told in a linear manner.

Avoid the "Why" questions.

When we ask questions, we want to avoid "why" questions and ask "how" did that happen, or "what" happened; we want to avoid harming or blaming, but instead, thank them for sharing.

Offer choices - empower the survivor.

And limit the number of times they have to tell their story. If it's hard for them to share, saying something that's really challenging or embarrassing, we want to limit the times they tell it as much as possible.

Limit the number of times they tell their story.

ALWAYS BELIEVE THEIR STORY!

When it comes to the difficult things our kids might need to discuss with us, we should always believe their story,

Slide 34 - Video

Say: That was just a cute little video to lighten the mood and show that we can't do it alone. It takes a village. It takes everyone of us to do our part watching out for one another.

Slide 35 - READY to Stand Curriculum

Go over what presentations we offer, be sure to highlight that we have adult presentations for almost any group. Talk about our key pieces that make our curriculum stand out!

Slide 36 - You can help!

Encourage the audience to get involved! Let the audience know we are happy to come to any group!

Slide 37 - Donations

Highlight the stats, the positive changes we are making.

Slide 38 - Follow Us

Let the audience know they can find us on social media.

Slide 39 - Let's Talk

Let the audience know there are several resources available, these are just a few. And use us!

We are a resource for you, your family, and your kiddos. Please, reach out to us. Email us, or call us, or message us on any of the platforms we are on. Education and prevention is why we exist. We're here to help.