What is Child Sex Trafficking?

As stated in the Federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act, child sex trafficking includes the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting a child under 18 years of age for the purpose of a commercial sex act. A minor is not able to consent to being bought or sold.

It is the responsibility of the community to identify possible indicators of child sex trafficking. The public shouldn’t rely on the potential victim for disclosure. Since traffickers and buyers use refined recruitment tactics, manipulation, and threats, the exploited youth are often unable to immediately disclose or recognize their own victimization.

Indicators of Child Sex Trafficking*

RISK FACTORS

Youth who:
• Are chronically missing/running away
• Have experienced childhood sexual abuse
• Don’t feel loved by their parents
• Have low self-esteem and self-worth
• Identify as LGBTQ and have been stigmatized by their family

BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS

• Changes in online presence (new profiles/accounts/online friends)
• Lies about identity (name, age, etc.)
• Avoids answering questions or lets others speak for them
• Seeks approval from others
• Seems coached/frightened/hostile when engaging with authority
• Doesn’t ask for/rejects help

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

• Multiple minors with unrelated adult males or an overly controlling/abusive male figure
• Sexual paraphernalia such as bulk condoms or lubrication
• Presence of minors at hotels, street tracks, truck stops, or strip clubs
• Evidence of travel without a guardian
• Does not have identification (or ID is being held by someone else)

*No single indicator confirms the existence of child sex trafficking, but several combined can increase the likelihood of it occurring.
Let’s Talk Facts

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery. This is a crime that occurs when a trafficker uses force, fraud or coercion to control another person for the purpose of engaging in commercial sex acts or soliciting labor or services against his/her will.

GENERAL FACTS

- Human trafficking is the fastest growing crime in the nation and is a 9.5 billion dollar industry annually in the United States
- It’s estimated that there are 27 million slaves in the world today
- 4 out of 5 victims are women or girls
- 1 out of 3 teens on the street will be lured into trafficking within 48 hours of leaving home
- National Human Trafficking Hotline Number receives, on average, 100 calls per day

Every 30 seconds, a human is sold into slavery

- Child sex trafficking victims have been identified by law enforcement in the Greater Milwaukee area from 2010-2014
- Homeless or runaway children in Milwaukee are at risk of being trafficked
- 92% of Milwaukee's known trafficking cases involve female youth
- 79% of homeless or runaway children in Milwaukee are at risk of being trafficked
- Open domestic sex trafficking cases being investigated in the Milwaukee area as of 2014
- Youths in Milwaukee that receive emergency housing resources and supportive services annually are at risk of being trafficked
- Children in 2013 were reported being sexually abused in Milwaukee and/or at risk of being trafficked

NEXT STEPS

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Check out Lacey's Hope Project - a local survivor led organization – at laceyshopeproject.org and on Facebook