

Sex Trafficking Among Youth: What Adults Can Do

Do you know what peer to peer trafficking is?

Sex trafficking is recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age.¹

A sex trafficker is a person involved in recruiting, advertising, obtaining, providing or transporting another person for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation.

Peer to peer trafficking is when youth exploit other youth under these circumstances. Sexual exploitation of youth by their peers may take place in schools, among friends, in dating relationships, or in other situations.

☞ These are some examples of peer to peer trafficking among youth.

My friends were getting paid to have sex with older guys. They said I could make money, too. After all, I could use the cash. One of them told me that her boyfriend can help me, but he will need to take a cut of the cash.

He said we could take 'hot' photos. And make money! But now he is pressuring me to have sex during a livestream.

I met this great guy at the place I am staying who is also my age...we hit it off. Soon I was getting presents and stuff I needed. After a couple of weeks, I learned I had to pay everything back by having sex with other people. I was afraid he'd hurt me. So I did it.

When your boo tells you, "Baby please! I owe this dude a favor. Just give it to him once. After this, it's you and me, exclusively! You do love me, right?"

I'm not even 18 yet. I am homeless. Then someone said I could sleep on a bed for the night if I agreed to have sex.

My BFF is hanging out with a different crowd at school. A girl in this group gives my BFF lots of make-up and fancy clothes and makes her get in cars with older men. I am worried, but don't want to get in her business... what should I do?



Learn more about what you can do to help youth in these situations.

Know the Facts

Traffickers may include family members, boyfriends, girlfriends, partners, friends, or social media acquaintances.

About 59% of survivors of sex trafficking in 2016 were **younger than 18**, and another 24% were 18 to 23 years old.²

Runaways are at high risk! In 2013, 10.4% of runaway or homeless youth were asked by a romantic partner to have sex with someone else in exchange for money.³

Learn how you can help

- **Educate yourself.** Find out how you can help a youth who might be in a sex trafficking situation. Get to know local resources and national hotlines.
- If you think someone is being sexually exploited or witness sex trafficking, report it. **Be an ally to a youth** who may be exploited or sex trafficked.
- Approach youth in a caring, nonjudgmental manner. Keep in mind that peer to peer traffickers may also be survivors of sexual exploitation. **Listen and offer assistance.**
- **Discuss sex** trafficking and peer to peer trafficking recruitment with youth and potential situations that may put them at risk.
- **Encourage youth to seek assistance** if they feel uncomfortable with certain situations or personal relationships.

National Human Trafficking Hotline

Free & confidential help.

Call: **1-888-373-7888**, available 24/7

Send text message to:

BeFree or 233733

help@humantraffickinghotline.org

<https://humantraffickinghotline.org>

For additional resources visit:

<https://teenpregnancy.acf.hhs.gov/>

¹ National Human Trafficking Hotline. <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/what-human-trafficking/federal-law>

² The National Human Trafficking Hotline (Polaris), 2016.

³ The Street Outreach Program, Data Collection Study and Final Report, 2016