

Child Sex Trafficking Youth Discussion Guide

for Parents, Teachers, Youth Leaders, and Facilitators for any Youth-Serving Organization



Be Prepared

Introducing the topic of child sex trafficking to youth may be intimidating or difficult so it helps to be prepared and equipped with as much information as possible. This guide is designed to be used as a resource with our Prevention PSAs to educate young people, which increases awareness and decreases vulnerability, helping to prevent them from being victimized **and** from becoming exploiters.

If you have not personally had any introduction to trafficking, we strongly suggest visiting our website at www.youth-spark.org and reviewing the information on our **Trafficking Resource Hub**. This hub has a variety of printable documents including red flags, suspicious activity reporting, and ways to get involved in the movement.

- 1. Who are you talking to?**
 - Recommended for boys and girls **ages 11+ and older**.
 - Consider all personal factors regarding your children or group and use your own discretion **before showing**.
- 2. What are you watching?**
 - Please watch the entire video(s) **before showing** it to youth and read this guide thoroughly for an easier discussion.
 - Be sure to have **resources** available should any information be revealed that may need action taken. Resource may include contact information for a therapist or pediatrician, police hotline, child serving agency, etc.
- 3. What do you need?**
 - Video(s) can be viewed from www.youth-spark.org or on YouTube by searching “Reading Minds” (2mins 30sec). The videos may also be available on other public Web sites.
 - Be sure to check the audio on the device to ensure adequate volume. Perform a test run to check all elements.
 - Provide pencil and paper for the child to write questions and comments that may be too difficult to verbally discuss
 - As you start this conversation, make eye contact; use a firm but soothing voice; speak clearly and directly; and sit close to your child as you talk.

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Effective communication with your children is very important. For most parents, they are unaware that their children know as much as they do about sex. So, have an ongoing conversation with them and help them to feel comfortable about talking openly. If something that your child says surprises you, don't appear alarmed or upset. Welcome your child to share what he or she knows. This is the best time to share facts and dispel myths. Always let your child that you are in this together!

Getting Started

Try to pick the most appropriate time to share this video with your group. It's best to let them know from the beginning that you want to share something that they may already know about and to make sure they are aware in case they ever need help, or know someone that does.

1. Set the tone

- Be sure to let them know it is an important topic and while it may seem funny, it's **very serious**. Ask them to try and watch the entire video without judging the characters and to keep an open mind.
- Be sure to encourage them to **be honest** about their true feelings and reactions.
- Let them know that the video may not seem real or may shock them, but ensure them it is not intended to scare them and that watching it can potentially help keep them **safe** and ultimately help to keep it from happening to anyone.

2. Video Review

- The video is under three minutes long and based upon your child or audience, you can decide how long the discussion lasts. There is no specific duration or time limit – nothing is too long or too short.

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Having a discussion about sex can be very intimidating for parents and children. However, preparing for the talk can erase some of that anxiety. Briefly ask your child what they know about the topic. Start with a discussion about facts and myths. Then watch the film with your child. Be sure to leave plenty of time to talk about your child's reaction. Lastly, identify safety measures that your family can put in place and role-play different scenarios. Although the topic is serious, don't be afraid to add a bit of humor and ensure your child that it is okay to have this conversation. Throughout the conversation, listen to your child speak without interrupting, judging or criticizing. Allow your child to express himself or herself completely.

Start the Conversation

After reviewing the video, here are some questions that you may ask and some suggested responses you can provide to relay accurate information on the topic of human trafficking. Always allow the viewer to complete their statements in their entirety.

Reporting Suspicious Activity

It's important to teach youth how to report suspicious behavior and that there's an easy way to do it without putting themselves in any danger. To report an anonymous tip in the Metro Atlanta area, call

(404) 577-TIPS

We suggest researching your local anonymous Tip Line to reference during the discussion.

Need Help?

It's equally important to teach about services that are available as youth are often the best eyes and ears in the community! For any boy or girl (under age 18) that may need help in Georgia, please contact our statewide system of care:

**Georgia Care Connection Office
(404) 602-0068**

For any youth that may be in an unsafe place and need a ride, call Project Safe Place.

(770) 964-3301 or text "Safe" and your location to 69866. You may also walk into any Quik Trip (QT) Gas Station for help.

1. **What do you think about the video we just watched?** **Pause for Response*

Allow them to answer freely without guiding them. This will let you know what knowledge they may already have and also gauge how to direct the conversation.

Recommended Response: Unfortunately, what happened in the video is something that really happens to young people in our community, as well as across the United States and in other countries. I'm sharing this with you because I don't want it to happen to you or anyone you know. This is illegal and if someone ever tries to get you to do any of the things you saw, you should feel completely comfortable coming to me, the police, or anyone else you trust.

*Feel free to share with them the definition of **commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC)** in any words you are comfortable with or the best description for them. Refer to the youthSpark Trafficking Resource Hub for a detailed list of terms. We recommend using the word "trafficking" to provide accurate education.*

Child Sex Trafficking, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, Sex Slavery, and Human Trafficking are all terms you may have heard but it is a crime for anyone to make money by forcing someone else to have sex. If any adult pays to have sex with a young person, they can face jail time and it is a very serious crime.

2. **What do you know about "trafficking"?** **Pause for Response*

Recommended Response: Many people don't understand this issue and what we've seen on TV and what we hear in music may not let you really understand what's happening to some young people. When someone does this to a young person, even if it looks like that young person wanted to do it, they are taking advantage of them. No adult should ever ask a young person to have sex with anyone for money, food, clothes, or a place to sleep.

3. **What did you think about the girls in this video?** **Pause for Response*

Recommended Response: The girls in this video are victims of a crime. Even though it may have looked like they were ok with it, most times they are scared and may not have someone they trust that they can talk to. Sometimes they believe they have to do what those bad men say. No one shared a video like this with them when they were young so that they knew they didn't have to be scared. Or these girls may have been hurt by the adults in their life when they were younger, so they don't know which adults they can trust now. Maybe there are no parents or other adults they know who are giving them love, so

they look for love in other places.

The girls were both white and black because it could happen to anyone of any color. This doesn't just happen in "bad" neighborhoods. It could happen to anyone and I never want it to happen to you. There were girls in this video but it can also happen to boys. When this happens to boys, it doesn't have anything to do with their sexuality, and it may be scarier for a young boy to tell someone. **Victims never have to be ashamed because it is never their fault. Never.**

4. **What did you think about the guys in this video?** **Pause for Response*

Recommended Response: The guys in the video are bad people. No adult should ever try to have sex with a young person or pay to have sex with them. You heard the word "pimp" in the video and that's just a name given to the person who is selling the young girl or boy. I know you may think "pimp" is a cool word but it isn't. Buying or selling sex is a crime and you should never do either one of these when you grow up. Sometimes men think that because they are paying the boy or girl, they are helping them. They are wrong.

Not all pimps are black and not all buyers are white. Just like the victims, these people can be any race. No matter what, it is wrong and it is illegal. Adults should protect and help children, not force them to do something they don't want to do.

5. **What should you do if you, or someone you know, may be involved in this?** **Pause for Response*

Recommended Response: Please tell me or any other adult that you trust if this happened to you or someone else. You should never be ashamed and regardless of what you may have done, you did not do anything wrong. There are a lot of people who can help, including the police. You never have to be afraid; just speak up and say something.



The average age of entry into prostitution is 12-14 years old. It's never too early to speak to your child. We hope you will be encouraged to speak to all the youth in your life without the conversation being too scary or too sexual in nature. youthSpark supports speaking to children at a young age in an effort to prevent them from ever being victimized in the first place and to change the mindsets of young boys that will soon grow up to be young men.

One of the main causes of vulnerability to traffickers is when a child runs away from home due to conflict. For any child that may "on the run", please share the **1-800RUNAWAY** hotline to connect them to immediate help, services, mediation and even transportation resources.

SPECIAL NOTES FOR PARENTS

This discussion does not have to be a long or “heavy” one. This guide is here to help you feel more equipped and to encourage you to use your normal language when speaking to your child. As long as you are having the conversation, you are directly reducing your child’s vulnerability. Remember that using the correct terms with a victim-centered approach will help to ensure proper education and awareness. We encourage you to have ongoing conversations discussing vulnerabilities and methods of protection

SPECIAL NOTES FOR OTHER FACILITATORS

This discussion can be kept general and brief, you do not have to go into great detail. This is a conversation starter to introduce these ideas to our youth and help them start thinking about this important issue. We recommend letting parents know that you will be talking about this topic so that they can be prepared to answer any questions that may come up later. We also encourage you to check back in with your group in a few days or weeks as they might have additional questions after having more time to think about it. Also, as mentioned previously, keep a list of resources handy in the event the child discloses information that requires follow-up, or someone requests assistance related to child sex trafficking.

***This discussion guide was created by youthSpark’s Human Trafficking Experts
and our Trauma-Informed Licensed Psychotherapist.***