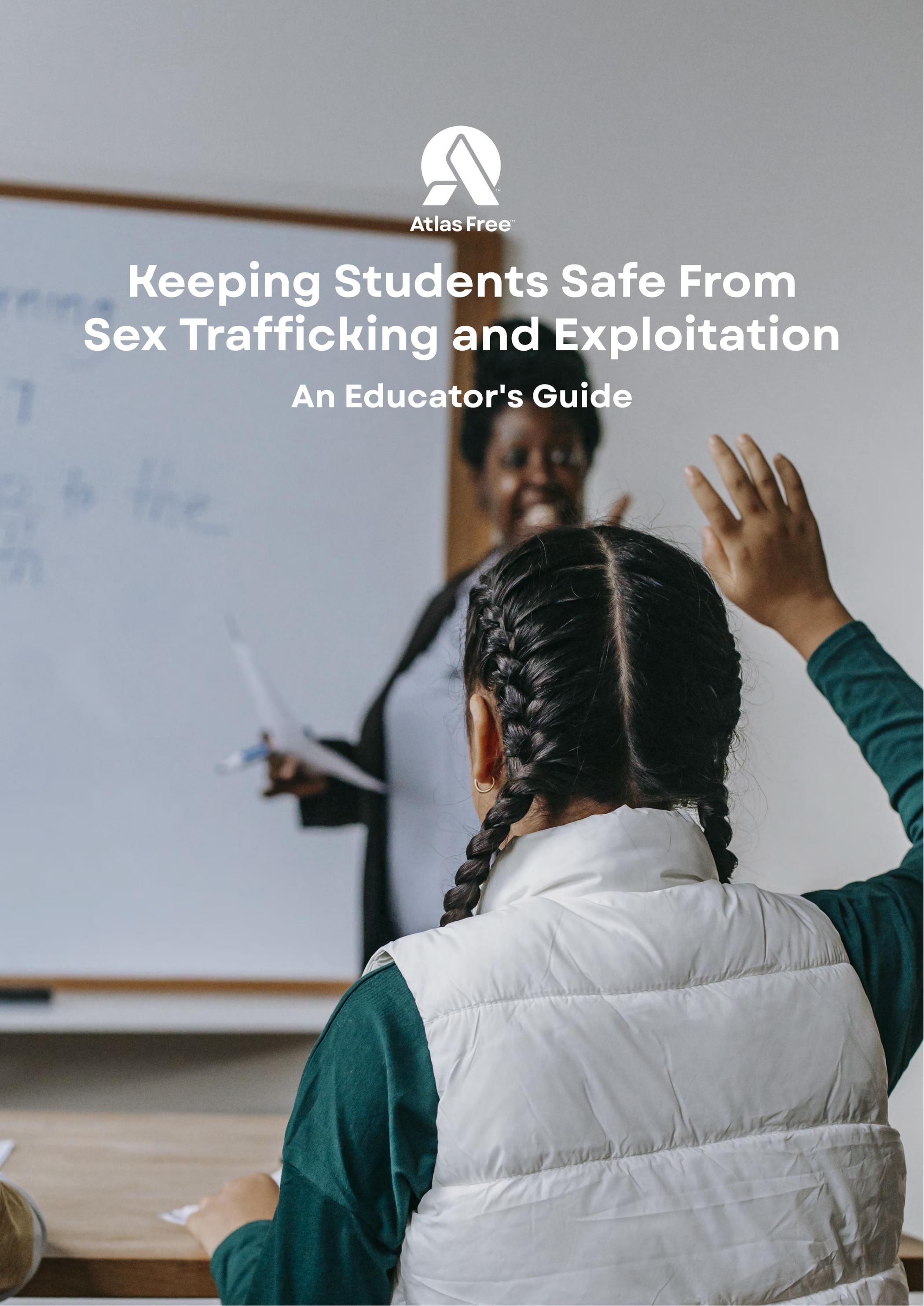




Atlas Free™

Keeping Students Safe From Sex Trafficking and Exploitation

An Educator's Guide



Human trafficking is a criminal activity that continues to increase rapidly throughout the world. If you're a teacher, administrator, coach, or you work with children in your community regularly, you have a unique opportunity in the fight against human trafficking. School personnel is the most common group to contact young victims regularly. You need to know what trafficking is and how you can identify it.

Human Trafficking is defined as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act where such an act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such action has not attained 18 years of age.

Sex trafficking is a crime that often goes unseen and unpunished because it can be challenging to identify.

In general, human trafficking largely goes unnoticed at schools and higher learning institutions. Traffickers don't have to conceal themselves behind a mask or hide their intentions. They usually have the best cover of all: that of a parent, a boyfriend, a friend, or a trusted member of the community. The relationship the traffickers cultivate makes it easy for them and for their actions to fly under the radar.

Your role in the classroom is crucial

Many children grow up believing lies about their lives. Some are told the abuse happens to everyone their age—and that it's "normal." Others are too humiliated to tell the truth, or terrified to speak out against their abusers.

Traffickers generally will not force a child to do anything; they just entice them with the "help" they offer. Surprisingly, child victims of human trafficking will often remain in school despite the horrible circumstances they find themselves in outside of school. Because of this, the school day might be the only time a child victim is *free* from the trafficker. Hence, it is important for teachers to be equipped with knowledge about human trafficking so they can recognize signs in their students and adequately educate children about human trafficking in general.

More than likely, some of the students walking the halls of your school are secretly being abused at home or by someone close to them. As a teacher or class instructor, it is important to talk to your children about the risks of human trafficking and instruct them on what to do if they encounter it. The more we work together to spread awareness, the more likely we are to prevent these tragedies from occurring as a community.

Child Sex Trafficking

Inducing a child under age 18 to perform a commercial sex act, *with or without* force, fraud, or coercion, is human trafficking. There are no exceptions. Children can never be responsible for or complicit in their abuse. Sex trafficking can have devastating consequences for children, including long-lasting physical and psychological trauma, sexually transmitted infections, substance use disorders, unplanned pregnancy, and mental health problems, such as depression and suicidal ideation. While everyone experiences trauma differently, survivors' stories share the common threads of manipulation and abuse.

Students at greatest risk:

Are those that...

- Have run away from home or are experiencing homelessness
- Are in the foster care system
- Have an unstable home environment or a dysfunctional family
- Lack social support
- Lack personal safety
- Have a history of sexual abuse
- Have a history of dating violence
- Are in the LGBTQ+ community
- Experience chronic maltreatment and neglect
- Have low self-esteem
- Live in isolation
- Live in poverty
- Have a mental illness or learning disability
- Show emotional distress



Signs of trafficking and exploitation

What to watch out for



As a teacher, you probably won't witness kids being forced into unmarked vans or money exchanges between students and shady-looking characters. Instead, traffickers are often active community members, so children trust them quickly.

Signs of human trafficking in schools are usually much less noticeable. Observe the following behavioral indicators in kids and teens you spend time with daily. If you notice any, it's time to start paying closer attention.

- Inappropriate references or sexual jargon beyond age-specific norms, particularly to highlight their personal experiences or sexual encounters
- Signs of psychological coercion include an overly submissive attitude
- Signs of physical or psychological trauma
- Unexplained school absences
- An abrupt change in attire, behavior, or relationships
- The presence of an older "boyfriend" or "girlfriend"
- Travel with an older male or female who is not a guardian
- The sudden presence of expensive material possessions
- Chronic running away
- Homelessness
- Signs of psychological coercion, such as depression, anxiety, and/or an overly submissive attitude
- Lack of control over his/her schedule, money, and/or proof of identification
- Signs of physical trauma (like bruises, cuts, burns, or scars)
- Poor health, as evidenced by sexually transmitted diseases, malnutrition, or severe dental problems
- Substance abuse or addictions
- Selling drugs

- A sudden change in attention to personal hygiene
- Tattoos (a form of branding) displaying the name or moniker of a trafficker, such as “daddy”
- Hyper-arousal or symptoms of anger, panic, phobia, irritability, hyperactivity, frequent crying, temper tantrums, regressive behavior, and/or clinging behavior
- Hypo-arousal or symptoms of daydreaming, inability to bond with others, inattention, forgetfulness, and/or shyness
- An inability to attend school regularly and/or unexplained absences
- Frequently running away from home
- References made to frequent travel to other cities

Signs of other exploitation

Exploitation occurs when someone is deceived, coerced or forced or deceived into participating in sexual or other activities. Child sexual exploitation is never the victim’s fault.

What to watch out for

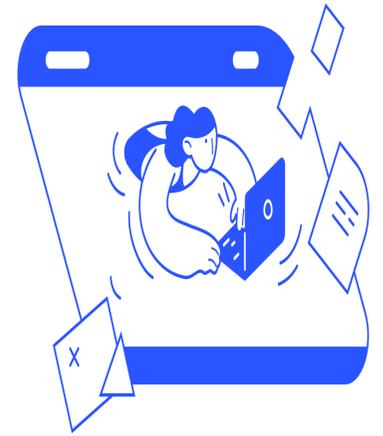
- Not being in control of his or her own money.
- Living with an employer or having an employer listed as a student’s caregiver
- A desire to quit a job but not being allowed to do so





Cyber Trafficking

Things to Watch Out For



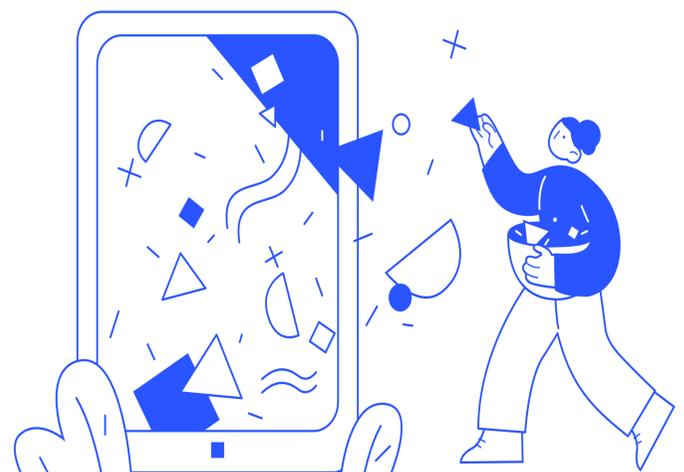
Technology is likely one of the most powerful of all the factors that regularly profoundly impact human existence. For example, over the last two decades, social media has almost completely revolutionized how we vote, find friends, and engage in public debate. We are only beginning to realize social media's potential impact on political, scientific, and societal processes.

Current trafficking operations target online resources to identify and exploit victims. Because they can find at-risk victims without appearing in person, it is easier to prey on vulnerable children. Teachers or parents might notice a criminal hanging around public schools or family neighborhoods. However, with social media access and a smartphone, there has been a global rise in first contacts taking place online.

Cyber trafficking is livestreaming sexual abuse, webcam sex tourism, information and communication technology, facilitated sexual exploitation, and coerced sexual acts online, including but not limited to rape and sexual acts on webcam.

Some red flags for cyber trafficking:

- Unrealistic job opportunities offered over social media consist of posting videos online.
- Reaching out online, especially over social media, offers to relocate the person or child to get to them or date them.
- Online modelling job offers that will happen in a specific place, often secret or not public, are often webcam sexual exploitation.
- Cybersex increased worldwide during the pandemic. However, an accurate number of victims is hard to obtain due to the clandestine nature of the crime.



What to do if you see signs of sex trafficking or exploitation in your school

1. Find out what your school or organization's protocol is so you know how to respond immediately if you suspect a student is being trafficked or abused.
2. If your organization doesn't have a protocol in place, In the case of an immediate emergency, call your local police department.
3. Keep in mind that it's ALWAYS better to be overly cautious and call the authorities when you have a gut feeling that something may be wrong.
4. Be supportive of the student. Let them know you believe them and respect their bravery in coming forward. Be sensitive to the trauma they have gone through and assure them this is not their fault.
5. Help your school put a a protocol in place.
6. Call the right numbers.

North America



- Report suspected trafficking crimes to the [National Human Trafficking Hotline](#)
- Report sexually abused or exploited minors to the [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children: 1-800-THE-LOST](#).

Latin America



Mexico : Linea Nacional Contra la Trata de Peersonas **800 5533 000**



Colombia: Linea Nacional contra la Trata de Persona **01 8000 52 2020**



Argentina : Linea contra la trata de personas - marcar el **145**



Ecuador: United Justice **+593967810094**



Costa Rica: Fundación Rahab: **(506)2257 7785**



Bolivia: National Hotline: **2248 2095**.



Venezuela: United Justice **+593967810094**

Africa



Ethiopia: 7711 (Child Protection Hotline)



Kenya: HAART kenya **0780211113**



Uganda: Sauti Child helpline **116**
SGBV hotline **0800199195**



eSwatini: **08000 RESCU(73728) | 975**



Europe: EU [National Country Hotlines](#)



Bulgaria: **00 359 2 807 80 5000** or **080020100**



Romania: **800290290**



Spain: 615430452 Amar Dragoste / **900105090**



United Kingdom: Modern Slavery Helpline **08000 121 700**

Asia:



Nepal: **1177 | +977 985-1292200 | 1098** child help line



Philippines: **1343**



India: **1098** child help line | **1091** (Women in distres)



Thailand: **+ 1300 | 02 276 2950 |**



Laos: **+856 21 413 488**



Cambodia: **855312554444** Hotline | **1288** | **85511444080** AusCam



Tajikistan: **+992 900 00 12 22**



China: 12338 (Child hotline)



Myanmar: 067 404 999 (Child hotline)



MENA Region:

Dubai: **+971 4 608 2347 | 8007283**

Bahrain: **995**

UAE: **800-800-700 | 800SAVE**

Qatar: **+9744912888**



What not to do if you see signs of sex trafficking or exploitation in your school

1. **DO NOT** confront suspected traffickers
2. **DO NOT** contact the family if you suspect the child is being abused by a family member.
3. **NEVER** attempt to confront a suspected trafficker or rescue a victim yourself; you could make a situation much worse for the child and put yourself in serious danger. Go to your local authorities and/or call one of the hotlines listed above.

According to Harvard University, “The single most common factor for children who end up doing well is having the support of at least one stable and committed relationship with a parent, caregiver, or another adult.” Your support and kindness can mean the world to a vulnerable child or teenager.

Continue to remind the kids in your life how much they matter and that you’re there for them if they ever need you. As a result, if something is bothering them or they’re in an abusive situation, they will feel more comfortable approaching you for help.

“The single most common factor for children who end up doing well is having the support of at least one stable and committed relationship with a parent, caregiver, or another adult.”



Acknowledgements

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- Tashina Khabbaz
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- UNODC
- UNHCR
- Baylor Education
- Their World
- UNICEF
- EverFree
- Justice Ventures International
- European Freedom Network
- Stop the Traffick

Thank You



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