



Trafficking Red Flags for School Professionals and Staff

- Unexplained absences from school, or an inability to attend school on a regular basis
- Sudden or gradual adverse change in academic performance
- Uncharacteristically promiscuous behavior, and/or references to sexual situations or use of terminology beyond age-specific norms, or use of language associated with the commercial sex industry
- Change in usual attire and/or grooming habits
- New and/or more expensive material possessions
- Chronic running away from home
- Behavioral changes: Fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, nervous, aggressive
- New relationship, especially with an older partner
- Deference to another person (other than the parent) to speak for him or her, especially during interactions with school authority figures (“relative”, romantic partner)
- Signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, or other serious pain or suffering
- Deprivation of food, water, sleep (many trafficked youth continue to attend school), medical care, or other basic needs
- Hotel keys or key cards
- Large amounts of money/cash rolls or refillable gift cards
- Prepaid cell phone, or more than one cell phone
- Not in possession of own identification documents (including school ID)

Interviewing Tips:

- Be aware of the **power dynamic** between you (authority figure) and the youth.
- Remember **not to take their reaction personally**. Speaking to a stranger isn’t easy or comfortable and speaking about personal trauma is never comfortable.
- Be mindful when speaking to survivors of any type of sexual violence that **asking details about their experience can be intrusive** and can evoke resistance due to feelings of embarrassment, shame, self-blame, fear or anger. Only ask for details of the abuse if it is a necessary requirement for your job (filing a report). Otherwise, knowing specific details is not necessary to provide help.