

UNDERSTANDING THE GROOMING PROCESS

How traffickers manipulate victims

Many trafficking victims aren't kidnapped — they're groomed. Grooming is a calculated process that traffickers use to build trust and gain control before exploitation.

Targeting

Traffickers seek vulnerable people:
Runaways, foster youth, abuse survivors
Teens posting struggles online
Those needing love, money, or acceptance

Building Trust

They create a false sense of safety:
Flattery, attention, gifts
Promises of love, success, or help
Acting as a boyfriend, mentor, or friend

Isolation

Traffickers cut victims off from support:
Discouraging contact with family/friends
Controlling phone, internet, or movements
Relocating or increasing dependence

Control & Manipulation

They use fear, guilt, or threats:
Emotional blackmail
Threats of violence or exposure
Withholding money, housing, or affection

Exploitation

Once dependent, victims are forced into:
Commercial sex acts
Pornography
Forced labor or crime

KNOW THE SIGNS. STOP GROOMING EARLY.

If you suspect trafficking, call 1-888-373-7888 or text "HELP" to 233733.
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