

Sexual Exploitation

Protect children & youth



Traffickers, pimps, buyers, and others prey on any vulnerability a youth might have. Youth who are sex trafficked or sexually exploited are not “bad kids.” They are victims of a crime. Even if they believe they had choices and do not identify as a victim, they have been targeted, tricked, and traumatized.

Safe Harbor law and services

Under Minnesota law, sexually exploited youth are victims, not criminals. Safe Harbor not only protects youth, but also provides services to help them heal.

If you suspect sexual exploitation

Be understanding. Do not try to rescue the youth. Get help. Call your local law enforcement, your Safe Harbor Regional Navigator, or the **Day One Hotline 1-866-223-1111**.

5 actions to protect youth

- 1. Set a high standard of love.**
Model healthy relationships, spend time with your children, and show you care.
- 2. Talk to your children about relationships.**
Discuss healthy and unhealthy relationships, including boundaries and consent. Let them know they should never feel forced, tricked, or pressured into any relationship or sexual activity.
- 3. Talk about internet safety.**
Provide safe internet tips, and let them know they will not be in trouble for talking to you about online activity.
- 4. Pay attention to your children.**
Monitor their internet use and be alert to friends who are much older or who isolate your child from others.
- 5. Talk honestly about pornography.**
Pornography shows violent sexual images and behaviors. Share that these behaviors are not normal. Talk about healthy and safe sex.

For more information

- **Minnesota Department of Health**
<http://www.health.mn.gov/safeharbor>
- **Minnesota Department of Human Services**
<http://www.mn.gov/dhs/safe-harbor>
- **Day One Services**
dayoneservices.org



At the Minnesota Department of Health, we work for all people and communities to have what they need to be healthy.

Visit us at www.health.state.mn.us

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