

Child Sex Trafficking Identification Tool for Law Enforcement

PURPOSE

This identification tool¹ is designed to serve as a guide for law enforcement to assist in identifying a possible child sex trafficking case. For the collection of important evidence and information, the tool lists red flags of child sex trafficking and risk factors that make the child vulnerable to becoming a victim of child sex trafficking.

This tool should be used with cases that are not necessarily labeled as sex trafficking (e.g., runaway, incorrigible, truancy, missing persons, criminal sexual conduct, trespassing, etc.) as well as with child sex trafficking cases. The red flags and risk factors listed in this tool are not exhaustive or cumulative in nature, and each statement, taken alone, may not indicate a potential trafficking situation.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL?

Please note that this tool is **NOT** an interview guide and is **NOT** intended to be implemented directly with the child who is the subject of concern. This tool is designed for law enforcement to answer the questions based on information known to them and acquired from other people or relevant agencies.

The red flags and risk factors are organized by the categories of “Clear Concern,” “Possible Concern,” and “Risk Factors.” Red flags are facts that are indicative of child sex trafficking. Risk factors are facts that are indicative of a child being vulnerable to becoming a victim of sex trafficking.

For each red flag and risk factor described, the corresponding “Yes,” “No,” or “Unknown” box should be checked. If “Unknown” is checked after attempting to gather the information, please provide reasons in the “Notes” box under each category.

¹ This tool is adapted from the Statewide Screening Tool for Child Sex Trafficking and Exploitation by Georgia Cares and Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. Retrieved from <https://www.gacares.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Screening%20Tool.pdf> (Last visited, June 28, 2019).

Agency: _____

Case Number: _____

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Red Flags – Clear Concern	Yes	No	Unknown
The child engages in sexual act in exchange for shelter, drugs, money, alcohol, transportation, or any other items of value.			
The child discloses exploitation followed by a withdrawal of allegation/recantation.			
There is a sexually explicit profile online found on community sites, internet classified ads, and/or social media sites.			
The child is located in a hotel/motel/inn with unrelated adults.			
There is evidence that the child has visited or frequented places such as: local hotels, strip clubs, truck stops, fake massage parlors, nail salons, bars, or escort services.			
The child has a previous record of a charge of “prostitution.”			
The child has friends or relationships with individuals (including family) who have confirmed involvement in the commercial sex industry.			
There are reports of, or the child discloses multiple sexually transmitted diseases/infections or multiple pregnancies.			
The child does not know the identity of traveling companion.			
The child understands/uses trafficking-related terminology (e.g., “in calls,” “out calls,” “escort,” “Daddy,” “the game,” “the life”).			
The child receives repeated calls or texts from a “boyfriend” or a name/nick name (e.g., “Daddy”).			
Notes			
Red Flags – Possible Concern	Yes	No	Unknown
The child is a chronic runaway, has multiple runaways or unexplained overnight absences.			
The child has started accumulating new goods that are unexplained (e.g., cellphone, clothes, shoes, jewelry) and/or receiving expensive services (e.g., hair, nails).			
The child has an increase in income that is unexplained.			
Multiple children are with an unrelated single adult male.			
The child has possession of prepaid, debit or gift cards that are unexplained.			
The child has possession of hotel keys or receipts that are unexplained.			
The child has special marked tattoos, or branding on their body that is unexplained.			
The child has lied about his/her age.			
The child has no identification or is not in control of his/her identification documents when it is expected that they should.			
The child wears overtly sexualized attire or has suddenly changed their appearance to dress more provocatively.			
The child shows signs of physical trauma such as unexplained bruises, black eyes, cuts or other marks.			
The child lets others speak for them, or uses eye contact or hand signals to communicate with others who are present.			
The child has a significantly older “boyfriend” or “girlfriend.”			
The child has a history of DJJ involvement.			
The child is using substances on a regular basis.			
The child traveled to/from a different city or state.			
The child is very secretive about where they have been and with whom.			
There is evidence that the child recently began using a street name or alias or is involved in gang activities.			
Notes			

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Risk Factors – Vulnerable to be Trafficked	Yes	No	Unknown
The child frequently leaves home without permission and/or returns home late.			
The child has disclosed or has confirmed a history of child sexual abuse.			
The child has disclosed meeting individuals or establishing relationships with individuals he/she originally “met” online.			
The child has been or is currently homeless.			
The child has a history of substance/alcohol use.			
The child has disclosed or has confirmed a history of physical abuse or neglect.			
The child has an unstable home environment.			
The child is increasingly absent from school (truant) with no explanation of his/her whereabouts.			
The child has a confirmed history of frequent or multiple out-of-home placements.			
The child expresses low self-esteem and feelings of despair or has other mental health issues.			
The child is identified as LGBTQ.			
The child has no contact with support systems, including limited to no access to natural supports (e.g., family).			
Notes			

NEXT STEPS

- If the child is **identified as a victim** of sex trafficking, a report must be made to the S.C. Department of Social Services if one has not already been made.
- If there are **red flags** that give rise to concerns that the child is/was a victim of sex trafficking, a referral should be made to the local Children’s Advocacy Centers (CAC) where it will be determined if an interview is appropriate.
- If it is determined that you do not have sufficient evidence to proceed with criminal charges but there are **red flags and/or risk factors that make the child vulnerable** to becoming a victim of child sex trafficking, a referral should be made to agency victim service or appropriate community resources.
- Depending on facts of the case, consider notifying any other appropriate local, state or federal law enforcement partners.

[Please insert agency specific contacts and/or resources here if any]