Lesson 26: Sex Trafficking

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will be able to separate myths from facts in regards to human trafficking.
2. Students will understand how human trafficking affects the people involved and others in the community.
3. Students will understand how to be an ally and support other students.

AGENDA

5 minutes  Do Now
15 Minutes  Review “True/False” homework
10 Minutes  “America’s Daughters” Video Clip
15 Minutes  Optional: Language Activity (do only if time allows)
5 Minutes  Call to Action
15 Minutes  Group Activity – Resisting Trafficking
5 Minutes  Closure
15 Minutes  MANDATORY: Post Survey
Homework  Sex Trafficking Prevention

MATERIALS

- Flipchart or Whiteboard
- True / False homework answers

CALIFORNIA HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS

2.3.G Evaluate how growth and development, relationships, and sexual behaviors are affected by internal and external influences.
5.3.M Evaluate how culture, media, and other people influence perceptions about body image, gender roles, sexuality, attractiveness, relationships, and sexual orientation.
5.5.S Support others in making positive and healthful choices about sexual behaviors.
7.4.M Practice personal boundaries in a variety of situations.

DO NOW 5 minutes

Activity
Write on the board and have students compete the following questions:

1. What does the word “pimp” mean to you?
2. Can you think of an example from the media (music, television, videos, magazines, social media, movies) where this idea is glorified?

Ask a few students to share their responses. Explain to them that although “pimp” is sometimes used in other ways, its original meaning relates to sex trafficking. **Pimps** are people who benefit from someone else’s work or actions – also known as traffickers. Traffickers can exploited other people in two forms, through sex or labor trafficking. In sex trafficking, pimps/traffickers benefit, by exerting power and control, from other people exchanging sex for money or anything else of value. In labor trafficking, traffickers benefit, by exerting power and control, from other people’s work.

### REVIEW TRUE/FALSE HOMEWORK

**Ask students to take out homework from the previous day. Quickly review each question.**

1. *Sex trafficking mainly happens overseas to young girls.*
   
   **False.** The truth is, commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking occur every day in the United States. Its victims - both male and female - live in cities and small towns across America.

2. *Most youth who engage in sex work make a lot of money.*
   
   **False.** Most teens are tricked or forced into sex trafficking. They are told they will make money, but their exploiters usually keep most or all of the money.

3. *Sex work is something a teenager can legally decide to do.*
   
   **False.** Teens of all gender identities can be deceived, manipulated, forced or coerced into sex work. Although some teens do choose to engage in sex work, the law says they cannot legally consent to do so. In California, current law says that minors will not be prosecuted for doing sex work, but instead connected to support services.

4. *Pimps are men in expensive clothing who protect those who work for them.*
   
   **False.** The truth is, pimps are exploiters and abusers who can be any gender. They often use threats and violence involved in recruiting and maintaining a youth in “the life.”

5. *Employers who hire people – even teenagers – are expected to follow regulations about keeping a safe workplace, giving works breaks, and paying a minimum wage.*
   
   **True.** These worker protection laws cover all workers, and employers who don’t follow them can be subject to penalties and fines.

*Be Real. Be Ready.*
6. It is possible for a person who has experienced sexual exploitation to go on to have happy, healthy relationships.

**True.** Youth can and do get out of “the life.” It can take several tries and often takes the support of a lot of people. It isn’t easy, but a better life can be built no matter how bad it has been or how long it has gone on for.

7. The exploitation of young people for profit is a form of abuse.

**True.** The commercial sexual exploitation of children and the Sex Trafficking of minors is on the continuum of sexual abuse. A person who has been abused is not responsible for the abuse.

8. It is illegal for adults to take, sell, or trade sexual images of people under 18.

**True.** Videos or pictures of people under 18 are called “child pornography.” People found guilty of making, selling, or possessing child pornography can face long prison sentences.

9. Trafficking is only exploitative if victims are chained up or beaten.

**False.** Threats, fear, coercion and manipulation are often enough to wield tremendous control over a young person. The ‘chains’ are often internalized.

10. California law now protects sex trafficking victims by preventing people under 18 from facing criminal charges for prostitution.

**True.** California law now make the crimes of “solicitation” and “loitering with intent to commit prostitution” inapplicable to children younger than 18. It also allows law enforcement to take sexually exploited children into temporary custody if leaving them unattended would pose an immediate threat to their health or safety.

Optional: If you wish, you can collect the homework after students have reviewed it.

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**“AMERICA’S DAUGHTERS” VIDEO CLIP**

Show the 4-minute video “America’s Daughters”:
https://polarisproject.org/resources/americas-daughters-video

**Suggested Script to Introduce Video:**

We’re now going to watch a short video featuring a poem written by a young woman who is a survivor of sex trafficking. As you watch the video, think about these questions:

- How do the experiences she had as a child affect her life as a teenager?
- What are the messages about love in this video?
Debrief:

After the video, discuss the questions that were posed at the beginning:

- How do the experiences she had as a child affect her life as a teenager?
- What are the messages about love in this video?

Point out the idea of a cycle of abuse: this idea states that abused children are more likely to have abusive relationships later in life as this experience may be normalized for them, what they have come to expect, or what they feel they deserve. Also, for children who have experienced abuse by a caregiver, a toxic association can be made between love and abuse.

Ask: What do they think we could do to interrupt this cycle?

**OPTIONAL: LANGUAGE ACTIVITY (Do only if time allows) 15 minutes**

IMPORTANT: Please do not do this activity unless you have enough time to debrief it. Otherwise it may reinforce stereotypical beliefs.

Read the following words out loud and have students decide if the words or phrases are Positive / Negative / or Neutral

Ideas for doing this activity:

1. Post three signs in the room, reading “Positive,” “Negative,” and “Neutral.” After you read each word aloud, have students silently walk to where they think that word belongs.
2. Have students work in groups of three or five and decide if the word is Positive / Negative / or Neutral.
3. Pass out a worksheet and have students circle the best description for the word.

Is the following word or phrase Positive, Negative, or Neutral?

1. Ho
2. Teen Prostitute
3. Sex-trafficked young person
4. Healthy relationships
5. Pimp
6. Player
7. Exploiter
8. Trafficker
9. “The Life” (a term used to be describes the experience of people engaged in prostitution and exploitation
10. Victim
11. Survivor
12. Ally
13. Judgment
14. Freedom

DISCUSSION:
What are the differences between the positive/negative/neutral terms? How do the words and language we use shape how we see the issue? How do the words we choose reinforce limiting gender roles or normalize violence? For example, is it different to say ‘a sex trafficked youth’ than a ‘teen prostitute’? Explore how the word prostitute implies consent. It also frames this is an individual experience when in reality this is a large-scale systemic problem.

CALL TO ACTION

Distribute the “What You Can Do” information sheet. Highlight some of the information on the sheet:

What we can you do to prevent Human Trafficking?

- We can educate ourselves about Human Trafficking and how it affects our community.
- We can find opportunities to educate and empower our community members because we know that the health and wellbeing of one affects the health and wellbeing of the community as a whole.
- We can act as allies to those who have experienced any type of violation of their human rights.
- We can practice non-judgment and instead create opportunities for folks to seek help safety.

How can we support one another to pursue relationships that are positive and uplifting?

- Be aware of how exploitation happens so you can avoid it yourself
- Use the right language and teach others to use the right language as well
- Understand that sex trafficking is on the continuum of sexual abuse
- Organize a human trafficking group on your campus
- In whatever you do, be an ally of equality and freedom for all

What should I do if know someone who is being exploited?

- Don’t judge – this is a young person in need of help
- Be someone they can talk to; provide support
- Tell an adult
- Refer the person to services or The Human Trafficking Hotline - 1 (888) 373-7888

GROUP ACTIVITY – RESISTING TRAFFICKING

Count students into small groups. Assign each group to answer these questions (printed on the worksheet):

1. Knowing what we know now what is one word or phrase that has been used to stigmatize or shame folks who have experienced abuse or exploitation?
2. How can the language we use affect a person’s decision to have open and honest conversations about their behavior?

3. How can we make it safer for people to reach out for help?

4. If you or someone you know were experiencing abuse or exploitation what could you do?

When groups are done answering the questions, ask some of them to share their answers with the class.

**CLOSURE/HOMWORK**  
5 mins

Ask students to share what they have learned about human trafficking  
Assign students to complete the “Sex Trafficking Prevention” homework page.

**POST-SURVEY**  
15 mins

Have each student complete a post test. Remind the students that the post test is anonymous and that it is not being graded. Let them know that the post tests help to see if the lessons are effective and what improvements can be made. If you are using the paper version, please send the completed post-tests to School Health Programs.
# Worksheet: Positive, Negative or Neutral?

Name: __________________________________________

Period: ________________  Date: ________________

*Is the following word or phrase Positive, Negative, or Neutral? Circle your answer.*

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<th>Positive</th>
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*Be Real. Be Ready.*
What Can We Do to Help?

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Resisting Trafficking

Names of Group Members: ________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Period:______________________   Date:_____________________

1. What are some words or phrases that have been used to stigmatize or shame folks who have experienced abuse or exploitation?

2. How can the language we use affect a person's decision to have open and honest conversations about their behavior?

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4. If you or someone you know were experiencing abuse or exploitation what could you do?
Carly, who is 15, recently met a guy on Facebook. He began messaging her, saying she was pretty. They messaged a lot for a few weeks and then he asked her to meet up with him. One day, he picked her up from school. Carly was surprised to see how old he was, but she’d been developing feelings for him and decided it was ok. Soon, he tells her they are dating.

For another few weeks, things go well. But soon, he starts texting her all the time, asking her where she is. Sometimes, he gets really mad at her. Every time after he gets mad though, he apologizes and gets her clothes or jewelry. One day, he says that he’s out of money because he’s been spending all of it on her. He says that he knows about a way they can make money together: he can arrange for her to have sex with people and then they can get money from it.

1. Who has power?

2. How are they exerting power?

3. What makes this person vulnerable?

4. How can you support Carly?