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About Human Trafficking – Newsletter #8

Children can fall prey to human traffickers several ways, including through a member of their family or by using social media. In fact, some believe that human trafficking is more prevalent than it is visible because “dates” are arranged via cell phone and the Internet, keeping it hidden from the public.



Within 48 hours of running away, a young person is likely to be solicited for prostitution or another form of commercial sexual exploitation.

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The sex trafficking of minors often involves a pimp, who can be a man or women or even a group of people, like a gang.

Pimps often employ a five step method to manipulate and victimize children. In his role as a member of the FBI Child Exploitation Task Force, New Jersey Human Services Detective Paul Vanaman, who assists in runaway and trafficking cases, says these five steps consist of:

Recruiting – Pimps target vulnerable youth, such as runaways, abuse victims and those with low self-esteem. Young girls are often targeted because they have less experience and knowledge about relationships and are easier to manipulate.

Seducing – Pimps will appear to care about and love the youth, buying clothes, iPods, and other items for the child to fill a void in the child’s life. When the relationship turns violent, the victim will do anything in the hopes of returning the relationship to the “love and caring” period.

Isolating – Gradually made to become emotionally, financially, and mentally reliant on the pimp, the victim will be told that their family doesn't care or understand them like the pimp does. The pimp will isolate the victim from others, forcing the youth to spend all of his/her time with the pimp. This isolation, removes an important safety net for the youth, sets the stage for the next phase.

Coercing and Violence – At this step, the victim will need to show his/her love for the pimp by engaging in prostitution. The pimp will say that he has provided for the youth and that the youth now needs to help attain the “glamorous” life they seek. Physically and emotionally abused, and sometimes gang raped, the victim will be told it is his/her fault. The pimp may withhold food and affection from the victim.

Reframing – The youth will be given a new name for their “new life”. Some victims are branded with tattoos indicating they belong to the pimp. The pimp will also make the victim feel shame, humiliation and guilt while also creating a sense of “family” with the pimp as the “Daddy”.

This process, according to the Lost Innocence Working Group, leads the victim to being:

- **Targeted**
- **Tricked**
- **Traumatized**

Previous About Human Trafficking newsletters are available [here](#).