



5 Powerful Ways Families Can Protect Children from Predators

These 5 proven, evidence-based strategies help families create protective environments that reduce the risk of child exploitation.

1. Build Strong, Open Relationships Early

Why it matters: Traffickers target kids with unmet emotional needs.

Example: A 13-year-old girl confided in a stranger online because she felt her parents didn't "*get her.*" That connection turned dangerous fast.

Action: Let your child know: "*There's nothing you can't tell me.*"

2. Teach the 5 Grooming Tricks Traffickers Use

Why it matters: Less than 1% of trafficking involves abduction — most is grooming.

Example: A boy met someone online who offered free game credits and asked him to keep it secret.

Action: Teach these red flags: **compliments, gifts, promises, fake concern, attempts to control and isolate.**

3. Guide Their Online Life — Don't Spy

Why it matters: Most grooming starts in apps, games, or social platforms.

Example: A girl thought she was texting a 16-year-old boy — it was a 40-year-old predator.

Action: Talk about who they interact with online and keep devices in shared spaces.

4. Empower Them to Say No & Leave Situations

Why it matters: Predators count on kids not knowing how to get out.

Example: A trafficker posed as a music producer and offered to "mentor" a young singer.

Action: Practice assertive phrases like: "*That makes me uncomfortable. I need to go.*"

5. Stay Involved in Their World

Why it matters: Isolation makes exploitation easier.

Example: A teen said no one noticed she stopped coming to school — until it was too late.

Action: Know their friends. Meet coaches, teachers, and parents. Ask curious questions daily.



10 Things To Know About Child Trafficking

1. **Prevention Starts With Awareness**

Parents, educators, and communities must understand that child trafficking is happening as well as the vulnerabilities that make children and teens targets.

2. **Traffickers Use Emotional Manipulation**

Most trafficking starts with grooming — building emotional trust, offering gifts or affection, and slowly isolating the child from friends and family.

3. **Risk Factors Include Trauma, Poverty, and Loneliness**

Children experiencing instability, low self-worth, or lacking support systems are most vulnerable.

4. **Conversations Should Start Early and Continue**

Prevention isn't a one-time talk. Build a relationship where kids feel safe asking questions and sharing concerns.

5. **Teach Critical Thinking About Relationships**

Help children spot red flags like secrecy, control, love-bombing, or anyone trying to separate them from trusted adults.

6. **Online Platforms Are a Primary Grooming Tool**

Monitor social media, gaming, and chat apps. Teach kids how predators pose as peers or offer gifts, compliments or “opportunities.”

7. **Empower Youth, Don't Scare Them**

Emphasize their strength and value. Equip them with tools, not fear. Let them know they are never to blame for someone else's manipulation.

8. **Community-Wide Training Matters**

Coaches, teachers, doctors, faith leaders — everyone who interacts with kids should be trained to recognize and respond to signs of grooming and trafficking.

9. **Not All Help Is Helpful**

Survivors report that some interventions did more harm. Trauma-informed, survivor-informed care is essential to prevention and intervention.

10. **Everyone Has a Role**

Regardless of your role in the life of a child or teen, you can help protect kids by building healthy connections, sharing facts, and being a safe adult to talk to.