

# What Students Learned & Asked

## What is human trafficking?

- Human trafficking is the exploitation of a person through force, fraud, coercion, manipulation, or abuse of vulnerability for labor, commercial sex, or profit.  
  
\* For any minor under the age of 18 involved in commercial sex, force, fraud, or coercion never needs to be proven. By law, they are automatically recognized as victims of human trafficking.

## Is kidnapping the same as trafficking?

- No.  
  
\*Most trafficking begins with grooming, trust, and manipulation, not abduction.

## Can boys and men be trafficked?

- Yes.  
  
\*Trafficking affects all genders, including boys, men, and LGBTQ+ youth.

## Can family members traffic someone?

- Yes.  
  
\*Parents, relatives, partners, and trusted adults can be traffickers.

## What is grooming?

- Grooming is a process of building trust and emotional dependence before exploitation.

## **What is love bombing?**

- Love bombing is when someone overwhelms another person with affection, gifts, or attention to create emotional dependency and control.

## **Why don't victims just leave?**

- Traffickers use fear, threats, emotional manipulation, trauma bonding, financial dependence, and isolation. Leaving can be dangerous without support.

## **What are warning signs of trafficking?**

- Sudden behavior changes
- Isolation
- Older controlling partners
- Unexplained gifts
- Fearfulness
- Excessive secrecy
- Online relationships with strangers

## **How can an individual in need get help?**

- A trusted adult
- School staff
- Counselors
- Law enforcement
- Local advocacy organizations
- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)
- Thorn
- Simply Report
- The National Human Trafficking Hotline